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IN THIS ISSUE

THE SHAPE OF THINGS 221

EDITORIALS

Churchill's Speech *by Freda Kirchwey* 224
The Senate Tax Bill 225
Workers of the World— 226

ARTICLES

The Baruch Report *by I. F. Stone* 227
The Solomons Campaign *by Donald W. Mitchell* 229
Why Cripps Failed—I. *by Louis Fischer* 230
To Nowhere and Japan *by Richard H. Rovere* 234
The Magazines Are Loud *by William H. Jordy* 235
Everybody's Business *by Keith Hutchison* 237
In the Wind 238

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

Mythology: Western Imagination in the Making *by Irwin Edman* 239
The Problem of Sovereignty *by Reinhold Niebuhr* 240
Report from the Near East *by Ralph Bates* 241
Childe Nicolas *by Frank Jones* 242
Four Recent Novels *by Diana Trilling* 243
Civilian Front *by Donald W. Mitchell* 244
In Brief 245
Records *by B. H. Haggin* 246

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS 247

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The Shape of Things

THE TRUE VOICE OF FRANCE RANG OUT LIKE a bell in the courageous letter addressed to Marshal Pétain by MM. Edouard Herriot and Jules Jeanneney. The immediate object of these two distinguished elder statesmen, one president of the Chamber of Deputies, the other of the Senate, was to protest against a Vichy decree dismissing the bureaus of both houses of Parliament and thus severing the last thread of parliamentary government in France. This action, as the letter points out, was in direct violation of Pétain's undertaking in July, 1940, when in return for a vote of full powers by the National Assembly he promised that the chambers would not be suppressed. The force of the protest, however, does not depend on this constitutional point alone, for Herriot and Jeanneney seized the opportunity to pen a general indictment of the Vichy regime. "You have," they wrote, "substituted unlimited dictatorship for guaranties that all civilized nations grant to accused persons. You have reestablished *lettres de cachet*. . . . We cannot clearly see your aims, but if, despite your solemn engagements, you intend to deprive the nation of the right to decide for itself freely its definite regime, or if without authorization of Parliament you try to draw France into war against our allies, which you yourself declared 'honor forbids,' we by this letter protest in advance in the name of national sovereignty." We are glad to note that Mr. Hull, in praising this letter and commenting on its significance, said that the United States government was naturally gratified to be associated with patriotic Frenchmen who had the courage to proclaim all the rights and liberties of the great French Republic. We can only hope this means that, in future, our State Department is going to associate itself less with Vichy and more with the Fighting French.

*

THE HERRIOT LETTER PROVIDES A MOST timely antidote to Laval's constant efforts to poison the hearts of the French people against America and Britain. This clearly was the real purpose of his two protests to Washington. Speaking of the Flying Fortress attacks on Rouen, the Vichy Chief of Government remarked sourly: "Americans could choose another battlefield if they want

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to show their friendship for France." And the invasion of Madagascar produced the revealing comment: "I hope that the event will cause the De Gaullists and especially those in Vichy to diminish." Laval's anti-Allied propaganda, however, is hopelessly handicapped by his Nazi friends. As German resources of man-power diminish, increasing pressure is being put on Vichy to conscript the whole of France for the benefit of the Axis war effort. And every step taken toward this objective inevitably intensifies French hatred of Germany and French contempt for Vichy. Laval's miserable bargain to sell French labor to the Reich in return for prisoners of war too ill to work was a hopeless failure. His wholesale shipments of foreign Jews and other refugees to German slave camps has aroused widespread indignation and led to notable protests by the Catholic church. Now Vichy has promulgated a new decree by which all men between the ages of eighteen and fifty and all unmarried women between twenty and thirty-five must show that they have employment that "the government will judge is useful to the nation." Nothing is said in the official text about the dispatch of workers abroad, but a commentary published by the official Havas Agency declares bluntly that it is necessary to meet not only the needs of the country but the demand for workers to be sent to Germany in exchange for released prisoners.

*

AFTER THE CAPTURE OF DIEGO SUAREZ, THE naval base at the northern tip of Madagascar, four months ago, the British made no move to complete their occupation of the island. It is now clear that during this period they were engaged in painstaking negotiations with the Vichy-appointed governor of the colony, hoping to reach an agreement which would leave him in control of its internal affairs provided that he was willing and able to give guaranties against its use by the Axis. The official statement issued in London on September 10 declares that it has been proved that these requirements will not be met by peaceful means. Consequently, with the full approval and support of Washington, British forces drawn from Africa have made three landings on the west coast of Madagascar and are advancing on the capital. Little opposition has been encountered, and there are hopes that the operation can be concluded with a minimum of bloodshed. Vichy, as was to be expected, is protesting to high heaven that no Japanese ships or planes have been near the island. However, a Tokyo dispatch published almost simultaneously with this protest stated that a Japanese submarine had sunk a British freighter in the Mozambique Channel, which runs between Madagascar and the mainland and forms part of the vital British supply line to Egypt. The appearance of a Japanese submarine in these waters, over 4,000 miles from its nearest acknowledged base, is itself a sufficient answer to Vichy's cries of innocence and a powerful argument against any further delay in securing complete control of Madagascar.

*

IN THE COURSE OF HIS REPORT TO THE House of Commons Prime Minister Churchill made only one real revelation about his conversations with Stalin. As we are hardly surprised to learn, the Soviet leader said very bluntly that he did not think the British and Americans had done enough to "take the weight" off the Russians, who for two summers now have been withstanding the major part of Germany's armed might. "It was difficult," Mr. Churchill remarked almost apologetically, "to make the Russians comprehend the difficulties of ocean transport. . . . It was difficult to explain fully the different characteristics of the war effort of the various countries, but I am sure we made their leaders feel confidence in our loyal and sincere resolve to come to their aid as quickly as possible." The Prime Minister went on to speak of Stalin in the most flattering terms, but this tribute seems to have been received without enthusiasm in Moscow, which is surfeited with words and impatiently looking for deeds. Meanwhile, with the second front still somewhere around the corner, the Russians continue their tenacious resistance. Outside Stalingrad the Nazis are still gaining ground yard by yard, with every advance paid for in heavy losses. Even if the Red Army is finally compelled to yield the city, its magnificent defense will not have been in vain. The long check before Stalingrad has upset the Nazi timetable, and already the German High Command is turning its thoughts to winter, making preparations by which it hopes to avoid the costly errors of last year's campaign. Three leading Nazi generals have been assigned the tasks of preparing a strong fortified line, of organizing transport, and of gathering the necessary stores, including warm clothing. Intensified air attacks on German supply lines should add appreciably to the difficulty of carrying out these tasks.

*

THE JAPANESE HAVE BEEN SUSPICIOUSLY quiet during the past week on all of their many fronts except in New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. North of Port Moresby they demonstrated anew their skill in the use of infiltration tactics by outflanking Australian troops in the Owen Stanley Mountain region and advancing to within forty miles of the important New Guinea base. This success has been, in a limited way, an even greater demonstration of Japanese skill than was the fighting on the Malay Peninsula, because, in contrast to the earlier fighting, the Japanese have had to contend with overwhelming United Nations air superiority. In the Solomons their success has been more restricted. The navy admits that some Japanese troops have been landed at night to reinforce the remnants still holding out in the

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jungles of Guadalcanal. But the number seems to be small, and repeated air attacks on the Guadalcanal airport have been beaten off with severe losses to the enemy. Although the Japanese appear to have sent considerable aerial reinforcements to the Southwest Pacific, the command of the air clearly remains in the hands of the United Nations. As long as this is true, it seems unlikely that the Japanese will undertake major offensive operations.

✶

PERHAPS THE POSITION OF MARTIN DIES could be worse, but we don't see how. On September 2 Attorney General Biddle informed Congress that of the 1,121 government employees branded by Dies as subversive only two had been found to deserve dismissal after an investigation not by Eleanor Roosevelt but by the FBI. That investigation cost $100,000; it wasted the time of who knows how many investigators; we can be sure it had its effect on the nerves of government employees. But it has had one result which makes it worth the price: Martin Dies has forever discredited himself with the FBI; and his demand that Congress reject the Biddle-FBI report because it "gives license to every government employee to engage in any communistic, subversive activity" was not designed to increase his prestige with J. Edgar Hoover. It is true that Dies and the FBI have been at odds all along and Congress may persist in supporting Dies, but after the FBI's damning exposure of the committee's "evidence," public funds for gathering more of it will not be easily granted from now on. Meanwhile the FBI is beginning to press its advantage over the Dies forces. Last month twenty-eight persons were indicted on charges, presumably documented by the FBI, of conspiring to undermine the morale of the armed forces. Several of them had been subpoenaed, but most of these had never been questioned, by the Dies committee. *The Nation* has been asking why for many long months, and now at last the FBI, just back from the wild-goose chase instigated by Dies, is also wondering. According to Kenneth Crawford, writing in *PM,* the FBI is not only asking why the Dies committee ignored blatant fascists while it concentrated on 1,119 government employees now exonerated; it is also getting curious about the committee's finances. May its curiosity increase. We are already looking forward to the FBI's report on the un-American activities of Martin Dies.

✶

CONGRESS HAS MADE A BAD START ON ITS new anti-inflation legislation, and there is grave doubt whether it will be able to meet the President's October 1 deadline. In the Senate a joint resolution has been introduced which, so far as farm prices are concerned, roughly follows the proposals outlined by Mr. Roosevelt in his Labor Day speech. It allows the President to impose price ceilings at either full parity or the highest market price between January 1 and September 15 of this year, whichever is the highest. This would enable the farmers to retain all their recent gains. The House bill, introduced by Representative Steagall of Alabama, who steered the Price Control Act along a course laid down by the farm bloc, adopts the same formula but adds a joker to it in the shape of a provision for the recalculation of parity prices. These, it declares, "shall be determined so as to include all costs of production, including the cost of labor, with all labor included and the wage rates used for all labor to be the same as the general average of wage rates for hired farm labor." The exact meaning of this masterpiece of obscure drafting may well baffle both lawyers and economists, but its intention is fairly clear—compensation to the farmers for restricting them to a parity price ceiling by altering the parity ratio in their favor. Mr. Steagall confessed he was unable to say just what the effect of this clause on prices would be, but there is no doubt that it makes the bill an inflationary rather than an anti-inflationary measure. With regard to wages, both Senate and House proposals provide the President with the broad regulatory powers he says he already possesses. This Congressional sop to its own pride appears harmless, though it is hardly impressive as a bid to recapture lost prestige.

✶

ELLIS ARNALL, THE MAN WHO HAS JUST relieved Eugene Talmadge of his governor's toga, promoted his campaign as "a crusade to restore decency and democracy in Georgia." He did in fact have the backing of the President, and there is little doubt that every liberal in the state chose him in preference to the red-gallused primitive from Sugar Creek. Confronted with Talmadge's inflammatory appeal to "white supremacy," his rampant phobia against "foreigners" from beyond the borders of Georgia, and his assumption of dictatorial powers on the ground that "you can't have a democracy unless you can have a head to appeal to" the way the Romans appealed to Caesar, distraught Georgians flocked to Arnall. The youthful attorney general backed the policies of President Roosevelt and pledged himself to free the university system from political degradation. The choice was clear, and the downfall of Talmadge is heartening, but to judge from Arnall's own standards, Georgia still has quite a way to go. The champion of "decency and democracy" rightly resented Talmadge's demagogic raising of the racial issue, but not because he himself is even relatively free of prejudice. "If a nigger ever tried to get into a white school in my part of the state," he told a rural campaign audience, "the sun would never set on his head. And we wouldn't be running to the governor or the State Guard to get things done, either." Arnall is to be preferred to Talmadge, but this is surely a new low in compliments.

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THREE YEARS AGO THE GERMAN FILM OF the blitzkrieg in Poland was almost enough to cause a neutral country to surrender even before the "liberating" Nazi army appeared in its capital. "Sieg im Westen" was, as they say, packing them into the *Lebensraum*. But the newest German film venture indicates a serious decline in Nazi war pictures and their prestige in neutral countries—if we are to judge by the reception in Lisbon and Zurich of "How We Dealt with the British at Dieppe." The critics in Lisbon not only found it a poor show, "which cannot convince even those who know little about movies"; one of them, who didn't refuse to give his name, said outright that it was faked and clumsily faked at that. He pointed out, among other things, that one sequence showed a captured British tank in the heart of Dieppe, though the commentary asserted that no British tanks passed the beach defenses. In Zurich the audience greeted it with irreverent catcalls. We can't help wondering why the Nazis chose the "negligible" Allied attack on Dieppe as a subject anyway. Surely some of the great offensives in Russia, not to mention the magnificent air attack on Britain, would be more photogenic than Nazis on the defensive at Dieppe. Can it be that the Great Director prefers not to mention the Battle of Britain and that the big Russian feature so loudly anticipated in Berlin a year ago is being held up until he can find the happy ending which movie fans, even in Germany, notoriously demand?

Churchill's Speech

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

WHEN I read Churchill's speech on India last Friday, I was struck with the unhappy contrast provided by Britain's treatment of its dissident subjects and of its avowed enemies. And I began to think about the nature and uses of appeasement.

It is an apparent but not a real paradox to say that appeasement is effective only when it is used in dealing with friends. Since long before Munich, Britain has made the all-but-fatal mistake—and America has aped it—of appeasing its enemies and betraying or openly attacking its friends and dependents. Spain fell because Britain and its associates wanted to placate Hitler and Mussolini. Czecho-Slovakia fell for the same reason. Mr. Churchill knows now that this is so; and he has laid the blame on his pusillanimous predecessors. But his government has continued to use the same tactics toward Franco and, to a lesser degree, Pétain. The consistent attacks on Britain by the dictator of Spain have been met by kindness, patience, and supplies of food and fuel. Franco is an enemy, though a weak, exhausted, and spiritless one, but because he is an enemy he must be paid tribute so that he will not strike.

But what is the use of placating a country which is part of the empire and subject to the military might of Britain? The appeasing instinct, so strongly developed in dealings with enemy states, fails when it comes to India. It fails where it could for once impressively succeed. Appeasement in India would be political wisdom, not weakness; it would be magnanimity, not cowardice. Britain has more than a million troops in India. It can certainly crush rebellion. For that reason alone, if for no other, it can afford to be conciliatory, generous. But instead it chooses to be ruthless.

Winston Churchill's speech on India slammed the door on appeasement; it was a declaration of war on the Indian National Congress and on Mahatma Gandhi. It was the speech of an unreconstructed, unrepentant imperialist. Taken together with the statement by Sir Stafford Cripps during the debate that followed, it is the most discouraging thing that has happened since the Cripps mission failed. An irreconcilable, embittered India faces a stubborn unconciliatory British government; and no way of breaking the deadlock seems open.

I don't pretend that all the fault for this situation is on the side of the British. I believe the Indian Nationalist leaders, and Gandhi in particular, were more intransigent than they should have been in dealing with the Cripps proposals. I believe their followers are tragically wrong in allowing fanatical concentration on the relative evils of British rule to blind them to the absolute horror of Axis domination. But the resistance of the leaders and the lack of vision among their cohorts are twin products of imperialism. They may be deplored, but they cannot be shrugged aside. They exist as menacing facts which may influence the course of military events in India as directly as did native disaffection in Burma and Malaya—and with more disastrous consequences.

India needs to be won, not whipped and jailed into sullen acquiescence. But Churchill has vetoed any new attempt to win India. And his speech was proof that even the frankness and blunt honesty for which he is noted disappear when the imperialist begins to speak.

Churchill said, for instance, that "the good offices of Sir Stafford Cripps were rejected by the Indian Congress Party." Louis Fischer's article in this issue recalls the fact, which the Prime Minister conveniently forgot, that every single party in India rejected the Cripps proposals. But it is the Congress Party that has launched the civil-disobedience campaign; and it is against them that Churchill has declared war. Again, he says, "Outside that party, and fundamentally opposed to it, are the 90,000,000 Moslems in British India who have their rights of self-expression. . . ." The dispatches reported that "here a member interjected 'nonsense' "; it was a proper interruption. Many thousands of Moslems are included in the Congress Party, whose president is a Moslem; the Moslem League, which opposes the Congress, itself represents

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but a small minority of the Moslems; and the Moslem League, as Mr. Fischer explains, also favors an end to British rule, but with independence for the predominantly Moslem states. None of these blurring details found a place in Mr. Churchill's analysis.

Nor is the Prime Minister more impartial in his description of the disorders. He says in this connection, "The Congress Party has now abandoned the policy, in many respects, of non-violence, which Gandhi has so long inculcated in theory, and has come into the open as a revolutionary movement designed to paralyze communications . . . and generally to promote disorder. . . ." Clearly this implies disbelief in Gandhi's sincerity; it implies that the Congress itself has merely awaited the chance to throw off its mask and unleash mass disorders. But no one who has followed Gandhi's career can doubt his hatred for violence; and most dispassionate observers will wonder whether the jailing of the responsible leaders of the Nationalist movement has not inevitably thrown power into the hands of less scrupulous men who are willing to turn the anger of the people to ends of violence and mass sabotage. If a pro-Japanese fifth column is, as Mr. Churchill suggests, directing the disorders against strategic military points, its operations may well have been aided by British measures of repression.

One cannot ask the British authorities to stand by while railroads are blown up and telegraph lines are destroyed. They must use force against force. But one may ask why they refused to negotiate with Gandhi when he asked for a final interview before launching civil disobedience. And, even now, they could, if they were willing, hold out a hand of reconciliation to the Indian leaders with whom, ultimately, they will have to come to terms. They could offer new negotiations looking toward a national all-party government in return for an ending of disorder and civil disobedience. That they will do so is not to be expected. The speech of Winston Churchill, with its willful simplifications and its reliance on force to resolve a complex social-political conflict, clearly announces that no change of policy is contemplated. He promises the Viceroy the full backing of the British government. He minimizes the dangers involved in Indian disaffection. Such a speech makes it extremely difficult for the President of the United States to intervene further and all but dooms the desperate efforts of Indian moderates to find some formula of conciliation.

Louis Fischer's remarkable account of the Cripps mission reveals the willingness of the highest British authorities to risk everything except a transfer of real power. He shows how close Cripps and the Indian leaders came to a satisfactory interim agreement, how small an area of difference remained when Cripps's original offer was withdrawn and the negotiations finally broke down. It is a terrible story when one considers the consequences of a failure that could have been avoided.

The Senate Tax Bill

THE response of the Senate Finance Committee to the President's urgent request for a steep increase in taxes to hold off the threat of inflation has, on the whole, been disappointing. Less than twenty-four hours after the President delivered his message, the committee rejected the Treasury's proposal for a graduated tax on spending by a vote of 12 to 0. The President's renewed request for a war-time ceiling of $25,000 on personal incomes was not even considered by the committee. Senator George, the chairman, declared that such a ceiling was not necessary because "a person would have to have about a $5,000,000 yearly gross income in order to have more than $25,000 left after taxes." This, of course, is utter nonsense. Under the revised Senate bill a single man with a $5,000,000 income—with no allowances for deductions—would have $348,000 left for personal use, and a single man with a $100,000 income would have more than $30,000 after meeting his tax obligations.

In place of the graduated spending tax proposed by the Treasury, the Senate Finance Committee adopted a flat 5 per cent "victory tax" to be levied on all incomes above $624 a year. This new tax has an advantage over the ordinary income tax in that the money is to be withheld at the source; it should also yield a considerable amount of revenue and help close the "inflationary gap" between incomes and the diminishing supply of consumers' goods. The $624 exemption and its simplicity of operation make it definitely preferable to a sales tax. Nevertheless, it is a bad tax because it largely ignores the all-important principle of capacity to pay. A 5 per cent tax on a man with a $1,000,000 income cannot be considered equivalent to a 5 per cent tax on a man earning $2,000 a year. There can be little doubt that the "victory tax" represents a more or less conscious effort to place the burden of paying for the war on the low- and middle-income groups so that the well-to-do shall not be called upon to go without their luxuries. It will be recalled that the Senate Finance Committee had previously rejected a whole series of levies that would have fallen, in the main, on the wealthy or on war profiteers. It had refused to increase excess-profits taxes or the corporation tax in accordance with the Treasury's proposals, and it had repulsed all efforts to correct the shocking injustice of tax-exempt securities.

The chief criticism of the Senate tax bill, however, is that it is "too little and too late." It is quite possible that a tax bill of this size might have sufficed to stem the inflationary tide if it had been enacted last January when the President first urged a steep increase in taxes. But during the past eight months an enormous amount of money that might have helped to pay for the war

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has been utilized, instead, in bidding up prices for our dwindling stock of goods. As a result, our entire mechanism for price control is in great danger. A disastrous inflation can still be prevented, but more drastic measures are called for than would have been necessary eight or nine months ago. The National Bureau of Economic Research has estimated that at least $22 billion in new taxes will have to be raised in 1943 "if inflation is eventually to be avoided." The Senate bill would yield only about $9 billion. The disparity may represent the difference between complete success in stabilizing prices, wages, and the cost of living at approximately the present levels and the ultimate collapse of orderly price-wage relationships.

The necessity for preventing a runaway inflation—which would wreak untold injury of the low-income groups—overshadows for the moment the far-reaching social implications of the Senate's repudiation of the principle of capacity to pay. Although the Senate bill avoids heavy taxes on the very poor—that is, families with incomes of less than $1,000—it places a crushing load on the middle-income groups—those with incomes ranging from $1,500 to $2,500. Families in this income bracket will be compelled to make a severe sacrifice in living standards. The taxes on the well-to-do are large enough to cut drastically into their ability to save but not large enough, as we may see from the illustrations above, to cause any real discomfort or giving up of luxuries. The effect of this inequality of sacrifice on national morale is apparently not even being considered by Congress. But in disregarding it, Congress may seriously impair the entire war effort.

Workers of the World—

TWO matters of international importance have stood out in reports of the British Trade Union Congress, which has just closed its annual convention. They are the questions of the immediate opening of a second front in Europe and the related problem of international trade-union unity. A resolution demanding an immediate mass sortie was moved by Jack Tanner, the non-Communist left-wing leader of the Amalgamated Engineering Union. More interesting than the voting, which returned a two-million majority against the resolution, was Mr. Tanner's principal argument. There was, he said, an influential section of British political opinion which was hostile to both the U. S. S. R. and to British labor. Since the demand for invasion now means that the mover believes the necessary resources exist, the implication is clear. It is that the Tories are deliberately allowing the Soviet Union to be weakened as a means of checking Communist influence in Europe.

At a remove of 3,000 miles *The Nation* cannot presume to assess the real force of Mr. Tanner's argument. Doubtless, in Britain as in this country there are still people bent on national suicide in the interests of their class. The Blackpool congress, however, would seem to have decided that this section of British opinion is not influential. For that is the meaning of the General Council's accepted resolution, which declared that the question of when, where, and how a European front is to be reopened is one for the military leaders alone. Apart from the merits of the case, the second-front campaign in Britain has obviously had some undesirable results. There as here extravagantly worded demands may intensify the very suspicions and divisions which the proponents of a second front assume to be operative.

The British labor movement has shown itself to be aware of the danger of anti-Soviet prejudice. The creation in October, 1941, of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee and the recent efforts of the British movement to induce the American federations to enter that committee are realistic enough. It was a pity that Sir Walter Citrine, who recently visited the United States to promote this project, was compelled to report failure to the Blackpool conference. What he had to say does not entirely coincide with reports current in this country. It is clear, however, that once again the disunity of American labor has stood in the way of international unity. Since the A. F. of L. has long been affiliated to the European Trade Union Federation, the British movement could not very well approach the C. I. O., with which it has no formal relations, without the A. F. of L.'s consent. Once the A. F. of L. had refused to associate with the Russian unions, it became practically impossible for Sir Walter Citrine to make official contact with the C. I. O. Mr. Murray, we understand, as well as other C. I. O. leaders, were displeased at the British delegates' failure to invite them. Quite naturally the C. I. O. itself would not risk a British rebuff.

Mr. Murray is said to have proposed another scheme to Sir Walter, whereby the C. I. O. and presumably the A. F. of L. could join a committee composed of trade-union representatives from every member of the United Nations. It is not hard to see the difficulties, though the idea seems a good one. In any case, outside liberal opinion may reasonably plead with American labor to end its divisions. Perhaps we may also suggest to the older British union leaders that they cease to regard the C. I. O. as a breakaway movement. Labor's demands in the post-war world are much more likely to be met if international trade-union unity has been well cemented during the war. And aware as we are that good sense has not always characterized Soviet leadership, and recognizing that the Russian unions are not autonomous in the sense that the American and British organizations are, the inclusion of the Russian unions in any international committee is still essential.

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The Baruch Report

BY I. F. STONE

Washington, September 13

MUCH can be learned from the Baruch report, but not about synthetic rubber. Regarded as a barometer of the war effort, it shows that the temper of our leadership has stiffened slightly, enough to impose new and necessary hardships on the people, though not yet on the trusts. Regarded as practical politics, the report makes it easier for the President to order nation-wide gasoline rationing to save tires, a painful task on the eve of Congressional elections. Regarded as scientific inquiry, the report comes to no conclusions which might hurt the endowment funds of Harvard or M. I. T. Regarded as a fortunate bit of public relations for Standard Oil of New Jersey, it takes the edge off the revelations of the Truman, Gillette, and Bone committees. Best of all, from this point of view, while the report attempts to appease the farm bloc, it also leaves the synthetic-rubber program exactly where it was—in the lap of the Standard-Mellon-du Pont interests.

The report is least informative where it should have been most helpful—on the technical questions of the synthetic-rubber program. Presumably Conant was put on the board because he is a chemist; Compton because he is head of an outstanding scientific school, with the best technicians at his disposal. Any corner-store statesman could have thought up the idea of a thirty-five-mile speed to save wear on tires. Any garage mechanic could have given us the Baruch report's chatty discussion of the best way to park a car. Any good hotel detective could have told us that we ought to hire "additional armed guards" for rubber stockpiles. We didn't need two college presidents and twenty-five "experts," kept discreetly and suspiciously anonymous, to tell us these things. Nor did we need them to tell us that priorities are working badly, that there ought to be more facilities for reclaiming scrap rubber, and that we ought to plant more rubber-bearing guayule. None of that is news.

The Baruch board was set up because Congress had passed and the President had vetoed a bill for a separate agency to make rubber from farm products in the shape of grain alcohol and butylene glycol. The board was supposed to tell us whether rubber from alcohol was a pipe dream born of prairie surpluses and the romantic Polish imagination or a scientific reality. This is a subject the Standard Oil crowd would rather not discuss. It is a subject the Baruch report did its best to avoid. Of the report's seventy-three pages, only sixteen are devoted to the synthetic-rubber program. Of these sixteen, less than two discuss rubber from alcohol. The fact that rubber can be made from grain alcohol is left to implication, and there is no discussion of the relative advantages of alcohol and petroleum processes from the point of view of time and materials.

The Russians make their rubber successfully from grain alcohol, and the Baruch board could hardly avoid the Gillette committee's discovery that a Russian offer to exchange technicians and information on synthetic rubber was turned down last February. The report shields the men and motives involved. The People's Lobby reveals that the offer was made to W. L. Clayton, the cotton magnate who is Jesse Jones's Assistant Secretary of Commerce, and George Hill, president of the RFC's Defense Supply Corporation. One would never guess from the Baruch report's description of these Russian processes that they are based on grain alcohol rather than petroleum, much less that the Soviets chose to make their rubber from alcohol after an exhaustive investigation of both raw materials.

"Every effort," the Baruch report says, "ought to be made to obtain this information." What good will it do us when we get it? The men who rejected it in February will still hold the purse-strings of the rubber program. For while the Baruch report recommends the appointment of a Rubber Administrator to centralize responsibility for the program, it leaves Jesse Jones and his men in charge of the financing. This means that authority will continue to be divided, that the new administrator may be as powerless as the highly publicized "rubber czar" who preceded him at the WPB.

In any case, the Baruch report leaves the synthetic program frozen. There would be little possibility of using the Soviet formula even if Jones and Clayton changed their minds. As a grudging sop to the farm bloc, the report recommends that a miserly 30,000 tons be obtained from new grain processes out of a 1,100,000-ton program. This allocation is to be kept on ice for six months, after which it may be canceled by the Rubber Administrator "if the needs for synthetic rubber and the production program are in balance," whatever that means. If not, the administrator may choose between the Polish process and the butylene glycol developed by the Department of Agriculture at Peoria. Presumably the Russian method would be a third alternative for this puny allocation.

Our ignorance of the Russian processes is not the result of Soviet secretiveness. It does not differ from our

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ignorance of the Houdry process, of what Standard Oil is doing with butyl, or of the tire-making possibilities of du Pont's neoprene. The dollar-a-year chemists from the big oil and chemical companies and their scientific schools have told us only what monopoly thought it convenient for us to know. Before and since the Revolution, Russians figure prominently in the development of synthetic rubber. The Soviet success with rubber from alcohol is no secret to chemists. A bulletin on synthetic rubber published some years ago by the Bureau of Standards lists in its bibliography many articles by Soviet scientists. The dollar-a-year men kept quiet about these possibilities, as about others, because a knowledge of them would interfere with the plans of the monopolists.

The result is a program so lopsided that it invites disaster. The casual reader of the Baruch report may gain the impression that we cannot afford to jeopardize our synthetic-rubber program by experiments. The truth is that every process in the program is more or less experimental, and that the program leans most heavily on those processes which have been least tried. The way to cut down the risk is to diversify the program so that the breakdown of one process will not affect too large a part of the program. The WPB, Jesse Jones, and the interests which use them have chosen instead to put most of our eggs into a few baskets.

Everything is topsy-turvy, idiotic in the eyes of common sense, but shrewdly planned from the viewpoint of monopoly. Most of the rubber to be made in the program is Buna S. The company which knows the most about making this type of rubber is Goodrich, and Goodrich has been given the smallest allocation of any rubber company. This is its punishment for daring to develop a buna-type rubber on its own after Standard and I. G. Farben had refused to give Goodrich a license under their buna patents.

The Germans invented buna, and Standard does not know how to make it. I. G. Farben, after stalling Standard for years, finally handed the patents over but only to keep them from being seized by the Alien Property Custodian. I. G. never gave Standard the know-how. But Standard has another synthetic rubber, butyl. Standard invented butyl and knows how to make it. Common sense would propose that we concentrate on butyl; Standard prefers to have us concentrate on buna: Standard has licensed production of buna but not of butyl. Special plants must be erected to produce the butadiene and the styrene that go into buna. Every refinery in the country in the course of its normal operations produces sizable quantities of isobutylene, the raw material of butyl. No steel or copper need be spent on facilities to make isobutylene. Information found in Standard Oil's files by Thurman Arnold's men showed (1) that there was enough isobutylene at major refineries alone to make 600,000 tons of butyl a year, and (2) that the Nazis were extremely anxious to prevent development of butyl in this country. The advantage of butyl to the war effort is its disadvantage to Standard Oil. It is so easy to produce, the raw material so plentiful, the cost so low—a third the price of buna—that it could never be controlled if the patents and the know-how ever got out of Standard Oil's hands. So we are to make only 132,000 tons of butyl as compared with 705,000 tons of buna, and the Baruch report recommends another 140,000 tons of buna on top of that. Wouldn't it be wiser to divide the program more evenly?

Within the buna program itself there is the same lopsided planning. There are four processes to be used for making the butadiene. Here, again, the oil company which seems to have the most experience in making butadiene is given a small portion of the program. Phillips Petroleum, Goodrich's partner in the making and marketing of America's first synthetic tires, has a one-step process for making butadiene from the butane in natural gas. It has contracts for 50,000 tons of butadiene. Houdry, with a similar one-step process from butane, managed by the skin of its teeth to get 15,600 tons. The largest allocation in the petroleum field, 283,000 tons, goes to Standard, which has a new and still to be tested process for making butadiene from butylene. Unlike butane, butylene can only be obtained by cracking processes, and it is needed for aviation gas. This possibility of a conflict was one of the most important technical questions the Baruch report should have answered; it weasled and dodged instead. "It is our conclusion," the report says, "that while the possibility of a conflict between the two programs does exist, it need not become serious if . . ." There are big "ifs" involved. Why take chances? Why not divide allocations among the butadiene processes more evenly?

We ought to try several grain processes in our butadiene program instead of concentrating on the cumbersome four-step Carbon and Carbide process, on which we are depending for 242,000 tons. We ought to try the Polish process, the Russian, butylene glycol, and butyl alcohol; the last makes a purer butylene than petroleum. This is not possible until we loosen the grip of the oil and chemical trusts from the synthetic-rubber program. The Baruch report moves in the other direction when it suggests that all butadiene processes be passed on by the Office of Petroleum Coordinator: this office has a worse case of oil-trust dollar-a-yearitis than the WPB. The present program can still be changed; much of it remains on paper. The Baruch report admits that some of these plants have not even been started. There is still time, but not much time. If we had an independent fighting man for Rubber Administrator, if we threw open all patents and processes to exploitation, if we gave enterprise free rein, we could lick the rubber problem. Monopoly never will.

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The Solomons Campaign

BY DONALD W. MITCHELL

THE Battle of Midway, the most important engagement in the Pacific area up to the present, accomplished more than the destruction of a considerable number of Japanese carriers. Coupled with the rapid repair of the American ships damaged at Pearl Harbor, it reduced Japan's ability to take the offensive and gave to the United States navy a definite though small margin of superiority. This transfer of the initiative in Pacific sea fighting is evidenced by the recent campaign in the Solomons.

The present state of public information on this operation is far from satisfactory. The British navy has been traditionally termed the "silent service"; yet Admiralty communiqués sound like the proceedings of a press agent's convention in comparison with the meager information vouchsafed to the American people by the Navy Department. This makes difficult either a true reconstruction of the Solomons fight or a sane evaluation of its strategical significance. Yet the Solomons campaign is of peculiar interest to Americans, for it represents, in miniature, the type of combined land-sea-air operations which will be required if Japan is to be dislodged from its strong positions in the western Pacific.

On August 7 American convoys with plane, cruiser, and destroyer protection, probably operating from New Zealand bases, scored a complete surprise on the Japanese garrisons in the southeastern Solomons, knocking out the defending seaplanes while they were still at anchor. Shore landings and the establishment of beachheads were greatly aided by American superiority in numbers of men, by an umbrella of protecting air power from carriers, and by the element of surprise. After two days the American position was relatively secure. In those days the Japanese attacked with land-based air power from New Guinea, but these attacks were lessened in effectiveness by the softening up which the Jap bases had taken from MacArthur's bombers and also by the speed and thoroughness with which the marines established shore defenses and mopped up the defending garrisons.

The attempt of Japanese cruisers and destroyers on the night of August 8 to destroy the American transports, which were defended by a similar force, resulted in a strategic check for the enemy, who was compelled to retreat, though losses may have been fairly equal. The later phases of the fighting have consisted of counter-attacks by the enemy designed to dislodge American garrisons from the positions which they had been allowed time to consolidate. With a kind of bullish aggressiveness which is one of their weakest and their strongest fighting qualities, the Japanese chose to use strong fleet units in an attempt to test American resistance and possibly retake what they had lost. Had a large number of torpedo planes been available to the defenders, the outcome might well have been disastrous for the enemy; as it was, American bombers caused considerable damage and defeated the attempt. More recent efforts to get troops to the islands by stealth rather than force have likewise met an alert defense.

In this campaign the American navy took advantage of the fact that the Japanese conquests are so extensive that at many points they are necessarily rather weakly held. American losses were not revealed, but in this type of action they would normally be large, and we should not be surprised if the navy announces the destruction of several warships. The question of whether it is feasible to send a naval expedition against bases held by land planes has received one more answer, but under conditions so favorable to the attackers that the extreme air-power school need not feel dismayed.

The capture of part of the Solomons is cheering news for several reasons. In the first place, the harbor of Tulagi and a completed airfield on Guadalcanal Island are of decided value. They bring American naval and air power closer to Japan's main bases in the South Pacific and may provide valuable springboards for later expeditions against either the northwestern Solomons and New Guinea or, more likely, the Gilbert and Marshall Islands. Technically the campaign was well conducted, especially in the coordination of air, land, and sea elements under naval command. The fact that the Japanese rather than ourselves were surprised demonstrates that their intelligence and reconnaissance services are no longer working with the precision of peace days and that our own are steadily improving. Most important, it is our first real offensive in the Pacific.

However, the Solomons battle cannot by any stretch of the imagination be termed of decisive value. The area and population recovered are not more than a fraction of one per cent of what we lost to Japan in the first few months of the war. If we are now taking the initiative, it is on but a tiny scale. Since a campaign on the mainland of Asia would be essentially military, an American naval offensive through the Pacific islands is not likely to make the Japanese postpone an attack on Siberia. Finally, it will be difficult in the extreme to expand slight gains anywhere in the Southwest Pacific into a first-class offensive. The shorter lines of attack—and all are long—lie much farther north.

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Why Cripps Failed

BY LOUIS FISCHER

I

IN INDIA, after a while, I sighed aloud for a person whose statements to me on the Indian situation would not be contradicted by the next person I met. On one question, however, there was complete unanimity: on the primary reason for the failure of the Cripps mission. Yet this reason has apparently remained a secret outside of India, and Sir Stafford Cripps himself contrived to avoid any mention of it in an article about his mission published in the New York *Times* of August 23, 1942. Englishmen and Indians in India agreed that the Cripps negotiations broke down when Cripps withdrew a promise he had made to the Indian leaders that India could have an immediate national government.

On April 11, 1942, two days after the negotiations broke down, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Moslem president of the Indian National Congress Party, who had been conducting the talks with Cripps, wrote Cripps a letter in which he recapitulated the course of the negotiations.

> What we were told in our very first talk with you [Azad stated] is now denied or explained away. You told me then that there would be a national government which would function as a Cabinet and that the position of the Viceroy would be analogous to that of the King in England vis-a-vis his Cabinet. In regard to the India Office [headed by Leopold S. Amery in London] you told me that you were surprised that no one had so far mentioned this important matter, and that the practical course was to have this attached or incorporated with the Dominions' Office.
>
> The whole of this picture which you sketched before us has now been completely shattered by what you told us during our last interview.

How did Cripps reply to this charge that he had reversed himself? At the end of his letter Azad asked Cripps's permission to publish this and other correspondence. Cripps's reply, dated April 11, was a four-line letter which read:

> *My dear Maulana Sahib:* Thank you for your letter which I have just received in reply to mine of the tenth April. I have no objection to your releasing the Congress resolution and our correspondence whenever you desire to do so.
>
> Yours sincerely,
>
> STAFFORD CRIPPS

If Azad had lied or distorted Cripps's promise, would it not have been natural and imperative for Cripps to say: You may print my letter but I insist that I never promised you a national government free from the Viceroy's veto? Cripps made no such denial. He has never denied Azad's assertion. The correspondence between him and the Congress leaders was accordingly published by Congress in an unbound pamphlet which lies before me.

I had the following conversation in New Delhi with the British official to whom Cripps reported late every evening during his negotiations with the Indians:

"I did what I could," the official said, "to draft a formula for defense. But then they reverted to the question of the Viceroy's rights in relation to the Indian *members of the government.*"

"Is that the issue on which the negotiations broke?" I asked.

"Yes, quite definitely," the official replied.

Azad, Nehru, and Rajagopalachari negotiated with Cripps on behalf of Congress. Each one of them separately gave me an account of the negotiations which coincided with the version of this British official. On June 1, 1942, the New Delhi newspapers quoted a declaration by Rajagopalachari to the effect that Cripps suddenly left India in a hurry, after it had become clear that a satisfactory defense formula could be found but when differences had arisen regarding the relations between the Viceroy and the proposed national government.

I said to a very high British military man in India: "Azad, Nehru, and Rajagopalachari have told me that Cripps offered them a national government not subject to the Viceroy's veto. They have put that in writing. I do not think they would lie and attribute to Cripps statements he never made.

The military man said: "If Cripps promised any such thing he did so without the authority of the British government."

"There is a story," I proceeded, "that after Cripps discussed the national government with the Indians, the Viceroy and General Wavell protested to London against it, or London disapproved on its own; at any rate, Cripps was then instructed to withdraw his proposal, and he informed the Indians that they would have to discuss the nature of the government with the Viceroy."

"The fact is," the General replied, "that Sir Stafford did not have the authority to propose a national government with responsibility."

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The General carefully did not deny that Cripps had made such a proposal. In effect, he confirmed it.

Although Sir Stafford Cripps does not mention this essential cause of his failure in India and instead blames the collapse of his mission on Congress and on the Hindu-Moslem difference, the British government and the United States government possess documents and reports which prove that Cripps failed because he promised India a responsible Cabinet government at the beginning of his negotiations and then withdrew that promise. I have heard many people argue that it is impossible to give India its own government now because you cannot make such big changes in war time. The answer is that this is just what Cripps offered to do when he arrived in India.

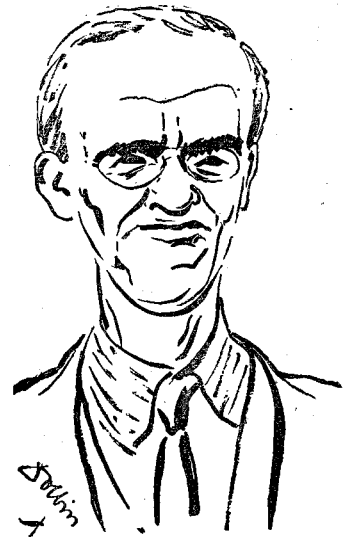
The Calcutta *Statesman,* British-owned and an occasional mouthpiece of the British authorities, commented angrily, on April 12, 1942, on the breakdown of the Cripps talks. "It would be easy to blame Congress and the other parties for the failure," it wrote. But "the blame lies with the India Office and the official section of the Government of India." The paper declares unequivocally that "the breakdown is over the interim proposals" about the immediate war-time settlement.

> The question therefore to be answered [the editorial continues] is, Was Sir Stafford Cripps empowered to offer a real national government or not? . . . Writing on this subject when he announced the proposals, we interpreted them as meaning that he was. . . . We held that the Cripps school in the British Cabinet had won. . . . It seemed to us that what was proposed was dominion status in action now, but that the diehards were determined to pretend that it was not. Success, we wrote, would elude Sir Stafford unless he was empowered to use very different language, accompanied by striking changes that would make it clear that the old regime is ended, and new men and new methods are at work.
>
> Sir Stafford Cripps was not empowered to use such language. Unfortunately, as the discussions proceeded he was compelled to make it clear that our interpretation was wrong. . . . The India Office, "this undesirable relic of a past age," is to remain, and with it the whole theory that the Government of India is responsible not to India but to the Parliament of Great Britain. . . . How can they know anything about governing India? How can they be anything but an incompetent and unpopular authority in a war? . . . Sir Stafford has been made a dupe. . . . We regret greatly the announcement of Sir Stafford's immediate departure. If the diehard object is that he should return discredited, that will not be achieved. Events can only bring discredit on the reactionaries.

Professor Reginald Coupland of Oxford University, a member of Cripps's staff in India, published a little book several weeks ago entitled "The Cripps Mission." In it he writes;" The decisive factor, as has been seen, was the clash between Congress and British views as to the character of the proposed national government." The Indians wanted a real government. Cripps had agreed. But subsequently "British views" prevailed, and Cripps changed his tone and told Congress leaders the matter was no longer in his hands and they would have to discuss it with the Viceroy.

Something had happened behind the scenes. As one American general who was in New Delhi during the Cripps negotiations said to me, "Cripps was bitched in the back."

If Sir Stafford Cripps had been able to stick to his promise, a settlement of the immediate Indian problem could have been reached to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. There would have been no Hindu-Moslem dispute. If Britain had said: Here is a real Indian national government; come and participate in it and defend your country, it would have been politically impossible for President Jinnah of the Moslem League or anybody else to refuse and say: "No, I do not wish to help govern my country, which now, at last, is free." Jinnah could no more have turned down an offer to enter an Indian national government than Wendell Willkie could refuse to help in the war effort if he were asked. This is the real answer to all spurious arguments about Moslem-Hindu differences and to assertions that the establishment of an Indian government now would let loose a civil war.



Sir Stafford Cripps

I asked Nawabzada Liquat Ali Khan, the secretary of the Moslem League (a *Nawabzada* is the son of a *nawab,* and a *nawab* is a titled big landlord), whether the Moslems would join a real national government. He said: "Yes, if Pakistan [a separate Moslem dominion] were granted. Then as a result of such collaboration we might decide we did not want to divide India." On August 17 the New York *Times* reported a statement made by Jinnah in Bombay. After much rich verbiage about what terrible things he would do if the British reached an agreement with Congress and the Hindus, he came down to earth and said "repeatedly," according to the dispatch, that he was ready to form a provisional government of India. "Naturally," he added, "it would be necessary to obtain the support of all groups including the Congress." This is direct enough. It means that Jinnah would cooperate with Congress inside a national government. Of course since then Jinnah has seen the

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Viceroy and may have decided to become more intransigent. But I carried out of India the definite conviction that if the British wished, they could have a working unity in India within twenty-four hours.

I feel sure that Sir Stafford Cripps went out to India with the best intentions and the profoundest wish to succeed. Hongkong, Malay, and Singapore had fallen. On March 7 Rangoon, the key to Burma, was captured by Japan. There was depression and even panic in some British circles. Everybody realized that the military defenses of India were weak and that India could never be held unless far-reaching concessions to the nation's desire for independence enlisted its 400,000,000 in the fight against Japan. Cripps, new member of the British War Cabinet, patriotically and courageously undertook the difficult task.

Cripps carried to India the British government's draft of a declaration it would be prepared to make if the Indian parties approved the text. "Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities," the proposed declaration began, "steps shall be taken to set up in India, in a manner described hereafter, an elected body charged with the task of framing a new constitution for India."

Article B provided that the native Indian states, ruled by princes and maharajas, would participate in the constitution-making body.

Article C read:

> His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the constitution so framed subject only to (1) the right of any province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new constitution to retain its present constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so decides. . . .

These "non-acceding" provinces could unite and draft their own constitution if they wished. The British government would then give them "the same full status as the Indian Union."

Article D stated that "unless the leaders of Indian opinion in the principal communities agree upon some other form before the end of hostilities," the constitution-making body would be composed as follows: After the war elections would take place for new provincial legislatures in British India. The lower houses of these provincial legislatures would then meet as a single electoral college and elect the constitution-making body by a system of proportional representation. The size of the constitution-making body would be "about one-tenth" the size of the electoral college. The delegates from the native Indian states would be appointed by the princes in proportion to population.

So far, the draft declaration which Cripps brought to India dealt with the post-war future. The last article, Article E, asserted that "during the critical period which now faces India and until the new constitution can be framed, His Majesty's Government must inevitably bear the responsibility for and retain control and direction of the defense of India." However, "His Majesty's Government desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, of the commonwealth, and of the United Nations."

This was the Cripps offer. Within a few days of its publication on March 29 all important Indian parties, groups, and leaders—including Congress, the Moslem League, the Sikhs, the Hindu Mahasabha, and the Untouchables—had rejected it. In his first interview with the Indian press on March 29 Cripps explained that "the scheme goes through as a whole or is rejected as a whole," and since each party disliked a different part of the scheme, all turned it down.

In that March 29 interview Cripps explained that there was a difference between "termination of the war" and "the cessation of hostilities." There might be "one or two years between the cessation of hostilities and the end of the war." After the cessation of hostilities, he said, there would be elections to the provincial legislatures and these would then elect the constitutional assembly, which would then tackle the slow job of drafting the constitution. The new scheme might not go into effect, Indians feared, until about five years after the war.

But that was not their chief objection. The Congress Party contended that if the autocratic princes, who are under British protection, appointed almost one-third of the delegates to the constitutional convention, the British government, which might also exercise some influence over other delegates, would be in a position to control or delay the drafting of the constitution. The Congress, furthermore, felt that the right which the declaration gave to any province not to enter the union amounted to the vivisection of India, which, Gandhi said, was "a sin." India, they maintain, is geographically a compact unit; despite its much-advertised 222 languages and 200 races, it possesses great linguistic and racial homogeneity. Gandhi admits that it would be impossible to keep the Moslems in an Indian Union if they really wanted to secede. But as Nehru and Azad put it to me in a triangular interview at Wardha, they object to divorce before marriage. "If after ten or fifteen years' trial," Nehru said, "the Moslems or anybody else wished to secede from the Indian Union, no one could stop them. But to give them the right of secession at the very start would mean that they would never go in." And many Moslems would resent that.

While welcoming Cripps's offer of dominion status, which, Cripps said, included India's right to vote itself out of the British Commonwealth, Congress therefore rejected Cripps's offer of a post-war settlement chiefly on the secession issue. The Moslem League, on the other

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hand, welcomed the right of secession and saw in it a theoretical recognition of a separate Moslem state—Pakistan. Jinnah, however, was afraid that in practice he would not get Pakistan because not enough Moslems wanted it. So he too rejected the Cripps offer. The Sikhs, a compact warrior community of six million non-Moslems inhabiting the predominantly Moslem Punjab, feared that Pakistan would take the Punjab out of India and thus "lamentably betray" the cause of the Sikhs. They informed Sir Stafford that they would "resist by all possible means the separation of the Punjab from the All-India Union." The Hindu Mahasabha rejected the offer because it gave too much to the Moslems, and the Untouchables because it gave too much to the Hindus.

These responses to the Cripps proposals prove, not that the Indian situation is hopelessly complicated, but that the offer was inept. The fundamental blunder was that the offer concerned itself almost entirely with the future. But Indians are much less interested in the post-war future than in the immediate present. Congress, rejecting Cripps's offer, stated that "in today's grave crisis, it is the present that counts, and even proposals for the future are important in so far as they affect the present." Promises about the "uncertain future" gave Congress no comfort, especially since they were accompanied by provisions and restrictions as a result of which "real freedom may well become an illusion."

The Congress Working Committee accordingly adopted its resolution rejecting the Cripps offer, and President Azad brought it to Cripps, but then they both agreed not to publish it and to proceed with their negotiations about the interim settlement for the war. "All these provisions for the future," a Congress statement handed to Cripps on April 8 declared, "need not come in the way of a present arrangement. As controversial matter, this might be left out of any proposed declaration at this stage. It will be open to any group or party to adhere to its own opinions in regard to them and yet cooperate in a settlement for present action."

Realizing that this was the only procedure possible, Cripps concentrated on the negotiations regarding the participation of Indians in the war effort. Congress was the only Indian party with which he conducted these negotiations about defense, for he knew the importance

HOW MUCH FOR THIS LOT?

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of Congress. Despite Congress doubts of the sincerity and wisdom of the British Cabinet's scheme for the future, it was ready to cooperate in the present. "The overriding problem before all of us, and more especially before Indians, is the defense of the country from aggression and invasion," President Azad wrote to Cripps on April 10. "The future, important as it is," he continued, "will depend on what happens in the next few months and years."

[*Part II of this article will appear next week.*]

To Nowhere and Japan

BY RICHARD H. ROVERE

ON SEPTEMBER 5 the FBI announced the arrest of three unregistered foreign agents who had published the *Living Age,* an old American magazine devoted almost exclusively to foreign affairs, on a subsidy from the Japanese government. The nominal leader of the group was Irvine Harvey Williams, an accountant, who was dummy president of the dummy corporation. Williams was born in Japan and educated in Germany. Walker Grey Matheson, the second conspirator, also acquired his fascist sympathies at first hand. He was born in Canada but early in life went to Tokyo with his father, an editor of the *Japan Advertiser.* While he was working on the *Living Age,* Matheson, according to the FBI, also served the Son of Heaven as a spy in the Communist Party. The only native American involved was Joseph Hilton Smyth, an alcoholic who was described by the press as "an intellectual of 'lost generation' vintage."

If it were not for Smyth's bizarre character, the story of the *Living Age* would hardly be worth recounting. As a conspiracy, the enterprise had no chance to undermine anything but the Japanese treasury. Indeed, it was less a conspiracy in behalf of Japan than a racket to mulct that country of as much cash as possible; for while Williams and Matheson may have been earnest partisans of Japan, Smyth was nothing of the sort, and he ran the show. The magazine was dying of inertia when in 1938 Shintaro Fukushima, Japanese vice-consul in New York, gave Smyth $15,000 with which to buy it. During its three years of venality not even its editors claimed a circulation of more than 3,000, and no responsible agency ever checked that figure. It is difficult to imagine who the actual readers of the magazine were, but since the *Living Age* has always been a ponderously highbrow journal, it is probable that they were thoughtful people who could not have been taken in by the fascist apologetics, which, as a matter of fact, were a very small part of the magazine's contents. For the $125,000 which the Japanese eventually sank in the venture, they got precious little. The magazine's affairs were run with wonderful economy. Printer's bills and staff salaries were small and rarely paid. Articles were either lifted from the foreign press, a traditional and legitimate function of *Living Age,* or lifted from their American authors by Smyth's half-brother Carlisle, a literary agent who became a fugitive from justice about a year ago when some of his acquaintances accused him of cashing checks bearing their names. The conclusion is inescapable that most of Hirohito's money went into Smyth's pockets and into his other publishing interests, the *North American Review, Current History,* the *Foreign Observer,* and a pulp thriller, *World Detective.*

Few of us who knew Smyth suspected that he was being staked by the Japanese, but none of us were surprised by the FBI's disclosure. What is significant about his case, it seems to me, is that America has at last produced a literary traitor of the type made classic in France since its fall. This country has had remarkably few literary Lavals, and these few were moved by something beyond the need to settle their liquor bills. Lawrence Dennis is an intellectually convinced fascist; William Dudley Pelley is a genuine fanatic; George Sylvester Viereck is a bred-in-the-bone Prussian. But Smyth was none of these things. A political cause, good or bad, held as little attraction for him as a temperance picnic. In his frankly alcoholic way he sometimes wrote and thought brilliantly, and in temperament he was liberal, but he was mentally and spiritually incapable of judging a moral issue. He was not a fascist, but he was perfectly willing to become a fascist agent.

Nothing that one can say about Smyth betrays any confidences, for he has written eagerly of his irregularities in one of the most curious confessionals of our time, "To Nowhere and Return: The Autobiography of a Puritan." Precociously talented both as a writer and an artist, he left his home in Plymouth, Massachusetts, early in his teens to live in a small artists' colony in Boston. After a year of casual study at Harvard, he got a job as press agent for the company of "They That Go Down to the Sea in Ships," and spent most of his time aboard the New Bedford whaler on which the picture was taken with Clara Bow, the "it" girl. After that he returned to Boston, but a breach-of-promise suit sent him scrambling aboard a boat bound for Central America.

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He worked for a while as a time-keeper for the United Fruit Company, and then joined in several revolutionary brawls, emerging with a Byronic limp of which he was very proud.

Back from the tropics, he went to New Orleans and became a small part of the local renaissance that flowered in the works of Roark Bradford, William Faulkner, and Hamilton Basso. Moving on to France, his appetite for liquor and erotic experience developing all the time, he became editor of the Riviera edition of the Chicago *Tribune*. He was fired because he left too much of the work, appropriately enough, to Frank Harris, who introduced him to the then aging Lord Alfred Douglas. He wrote a book of verse, "Tropical Fragments."

In 1928 he returned to this country, and his wife of the moment persuaded him to try for the big money. He became for a while an enormously successful manufacturer of slick fiction. But his penchant for liquor and divorce caught up with him, and he became a Bowery bum. To pay for his nickel whiskeys at Rainbow Benny's he wrote "true confessions" and became as successful in that genre as he had been at *Saturday Evening Post* fiction. Protracted D.T.'s again, then an insulin cure and a job on the WPA Writers' Project. He wrote a drugstore novel called "The Nuder Gender."

No apparent interlude separated Smyth's term on WPA from his emergence as a publisher of four old and respected American magazines. In his book, which ends at this point, he says blandly that his earnings as a pulp writer enabled him to fulfil an old dream. "For a long time I had harbored a wish for a magazine to edit," he wrote. "I wanted something that dealt with current affairs, current trends in the arts and politics and literature. I wanted something that would be part and parcel of the American tradition, a tradition which was too often forgotten or ignored." So, longing for something deep in the American grain, he went to Shintaro Fukushima and got enough yen to buy the *Living Age* on condition that it printed propaganda. And then, with the most innocent hypocrisy, ". . . on the morning I finally handed over a check for payment in full for the magazine, I couldn't help but retranslate the sum into the incredible number of words, at three cents a word, that it represented. Too many hundred thousand words, at any rate."

Smyth has entered a plea of guilty and is being held for $10,000 bail, which he has as yet been unable to raise. It is hard to guess what his defense will be, but he might explain himself by his own lie—"too many hundred thousand words." Smyth wrote so much, so cheaply at times and so brilliantly at others, that words came to have no meaning to him. I happen to know, for example, that while he was running the *Living Age* for the Japanese, he was also engaged in ghost-writing one of the most anti-Japanese books ever published in this country, a book signed by a famous correspondent who is an excellent observer but something less than a felicitous writer. I know also that he was the anonymous author of some exceedingly effective anti-Nazi propaganda in the form of cheap "one-shot" magazines about Nazi atrocities. Somerset Maugham once advised him to take ideas less seriously than the words which expressed them. He has followed that advice.

The Magazines Are Loud

BY WILLIAM H. JORDY

PURCHASERS of the May 30 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post* confronted a *fait accompli*. Quietly, with neither advance warning nor fanfare, the sentimental typography of Franklin and Lorimer had been summarily scrapped for a bolder face. The transformation was dismissed in a couple of sentences in "Keeping Posted." And indeed such modesty was completely appropriate, for the typographical face-lifting introduced nothing new. Quite the contrary. As the notable conservative among mass-circulation magazines, the *Post* served the tradition by being the last to change.

This complacent "American institution" had never realized that the thirties were critical for the magazines, which in those years bucked their strongest competitor in American mass entertainment. The competitor had more glitter. It certainly required less concentration. By 1941 there were 65,000,000 radio sets in the United States. Moreover, millions of American evenings, once presumably spent at home with a magazine, were now spent at the local theater with Clark Gable. And adding insult to injury, late in the thirties, picture magazines skyrocketed in circulation and advertising.

The more progressive magazines recognized the competition as much as fifteen years ago. To outstartle the other startlers, they adopted the obvious strategy of giving the art editor more and more domain. The space given to illustration and title rose from about 40 per cent of the front pages in 1930 to practically 70 today. A consideration of the steps in this evolution will perhaps help us to understand the peculiar characteristics of our mass-circulation magazines.

The *Post's* renovation was in a sense the end of the evo-

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lutionary period. Throughout the thirties the *Post's* format had dragged along behind the other magazines, with the management resisting changes as long as it dared. For example, it was already 1937 before the *Post* timidly used a couple of color illustrations regularly on the inside pages. But even such fustiness didn't mean that the American Institution wasn't justified in a little complacency. After all, it did have an individual appearance, and the new should have been grafted on the old, as it promised to be last spring. It was a big mistake for Ben Hibbs, the *Post's* new editor, to plop a copy of the latest *Collier's* on the editorial mahogany—with a "like this."

Consider some of the changes: the name of the magazine blocked in the upper left corner; a fatter, blacker type face; blurbs under the titles of all stories and articles; a feature complete on one page; editorials opposite the inside back cover. These are all characteristic of *Collier's*. What is more significant, they have been for ten or fifteen years. So the redesigning conference on Independence Square aped not only the economics of *Collier's* but its scheme for a more dramatic typography and format.

To make its format match its clipped journalistic style, *Collier's* in 1925 hired William O. Chessman as art editor. Up to that time the art editor's equipment had consisted pretty much of a pair of scissors and a pot of paste. His job was to "fit" the illustrations into the text, with the result that every page looked like every other. Chessman began to contrast every page with the next. A triangular layout flipped over into a checkerboard; a series of circles became a couple of thin rectangles running from top to bottom. *Collier's* covers were posterized with flat areas of color. *Collier's* illustrators were the kind who could draw a bold line, splash a vivid color, fill an unusual shape, catch an odd angle. *Collier's* title typography became successively blacker and bolder, with more and more page-space given to it. Cartoons or puzzles in the back of the magazine stopped the reader's eye long enough for him to see the advertising. All these tendencies began to appear before 1930, and while *Collier's* is certainly not the originator of all of them, it has shown a longer and more consistently progressive development than any other magazine.

The women's magazines played their part in the trend. Overplayed it, in fact. Many innovations were introduced by them. They never used one color where two were possible, or a half-page illustration where a full-page would fit. They used bigger title types. Most important, they pioneered in color photography. The best color photography is still found in them—witness the food spreads, recent *Home Journal* covers, and especially the "covers" fronting the three sections of each issue of *McCall's*. But the women's magazines affected magazine practice not so much by their single innovations as by their excesses in every direction; their screaming influenced other art editors.

Title typography is important in the modern magazine. It gets bigger and bigger. In the middle thirties Albert Lefcourt began sprawling its title across the *American*. The title often stood alone with no illustration. When he had to illustrate, he used a vignetted photograph, sheared of any background, and still makes distinctive use of this today. So successful was Lefcourt that the scissored photograph threatened to become the tricky and rather effete standard for all magazines.

Then 1937 brought *Life*. Henry Luce wanted no nonsense about his photographs. He dismissed trick photographic make-up as "cookie shapes." And it was good that he did. For no magazine was to have so much influence as *Life*.

To compete with *Life's* booming circulation, the other magazines adopted pictorial features in the *Life* manner. The *Ladies' Home Journal* has its How America Lives series; the editors of the *Companion* visit prominent people and report on whether they take one or two lumps in their tea; *Liberty* has a This Is America series; the *Post* and *Collier's* have pictorial features in every issue. But *Life* has had another, subtler influence. The vigorous geometry of the photograph has come to rule the illustrator. The easygoing vignette, which had tolerantly fitted any column of print, has disappeared almost completely. *Collier's,* the *Journal,* the *Companion,* and *McCall's* had already begun to banish the vignette, but *Life* speeded its demise. The vignette was quiet. The magazines were loud.

There are those who think increased illustration space will bring in another golden age in American illustration. It won't come. For the wish to startle leads not to good art but to flashy mannerisms. While the William Arthur Browns and John Lagattas, with their pastel washes and finicky line, will happily disappear, so also will the Leyendeckers and the Rockwells. Good illustration investigates details—frayed carpets, worn shoes, wrinkles. Today's illustrations stem from the photograph: we find the same intense blocks of light and dark, the same use of angles and close-ups, an emphasis on effect rather than on interpretation. More and more, too, photographs are replacing illustrations; usually they occupy as much as two-thirds of a magazine's picture space. Photographic covers, invariable on the *American, Redbook,* and *McCall's,* are appearing more and more frequently on the other magazines. Borrowed from the *True Confession* trade, photographs illustrate fiction. Saddest of all is to see both *Collier's* and the *Post* replacing the cartoon, which once accompanied so many of their non-fiction pieces, with photographs bought from the big photographic agencies.

Just as the photograph as used in the magazines now counts less as a single print and more as part of a

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larger geometric scheme, so the illustrator counts less as an artist. In 1932 Henry Dreyfus, the industrial designer, became art editor of *McCall's*. Almost immediately he revolutionized the art editor's position by making up a complete dummy. Whereas the illustrators had previously been handed the story and told to choose what to illustrate, they now received the caption that defined the illustration and even a rough sketch of what was to go into it. As a result the magazine presented an integrated layout, with contrasts from page to page calculated to surprise the reader constantly. It meant that the illustrator was pulled from the files for some personal mannerism. He took the caption, he took the sketch—and he "created" a picture with the same idiosyncrasies that he had displayed a hundred times before.

An idiosyncrasy, a mannerism, makes a big splash, a loud bang, catches the eye on the street, catches the dime in the pocket, sells a million copies and a million dollars' worth of advertising. It doesn't make a good illustration. The essence of illustration is a multiplicity of details carefully observed and honestly recorded.

Products of metropolitan slickness, the mass-circulation magazines of today sell America the ideal of slickness. Smartness, glitter, the big noise—these are the virtues they advertise.

Everybody's Business

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

There Ain't No Santa!

SOME of the tax schemes put forward by the Treasury can reasonably be criticized on technical grounds, but in all its proposals for increasing revenue it has stuck firmly to two principles: taxes should be geared to ability to pay and should therefore be levied on a progressive scale; incomes providing a mere subsistence basis should not be subjected to new burdens. These principles are unassailable as the fiscal foundations of a democratic society, but the Treasury's devotion to them has not saved it from constant charges of "playing politics." To my mind it would be much fairer to accuse it of neglecting popular psychology in the interest of social equity.

For instance, the Treasury has resisted tremendous pressure for a general sales tax. Yet, as taxes go, a levy on sales, despite its unfair incidence, would not be unpopular with the majority of citizens. So long as it was at a moderate rate its effects would not be severely felt by the average housewife at the time it was paid. The erosive action on purchasing power of a sales tax is similar to that of a steadily flowing stream, while income tax gullies the purse like a spring freshet and thus appears to be much more damaging even to those in the lowest brackets. Nor did the ill-fated spending-tax proposal make any concession to popular psychology. The fact that it would have required the filing of new and complicated schedules and the keeping of more meticulous personal accounts than the average person is accustomed to keep made it anathema to the public.

Curiously enough, the very newspapers which have been nagging Mr. Morgenthau for playing politics have been the loudest advocates of the Ruml plan, which was certainly packaged with all the merchandising appeal that one would expect from a director of Macy's. Campaigning on behalf of this scheme, the New York *World-Telegram* sent out reporters to ask the opinion of the man in the street and found his response satisfactorily enthusiastic. Of course it was: who wants to black Santa's eye?

The Ruml plan, if not inspected too closely, gives everybody something for nothing without hurting anybody. It proposes that the taxes we are paying this year shall be considered as taxes on 1942 income though actually they were levied on 1941 income. Then next year we shall start paying 1943 taxes in quarterly instalments calculated on our own estimates of the whole year's income, with adjustments made at the end of the year. Thus taxes on 1941 income are made to vanish. It sounds reasonable enough, and it certainly gets over the awkward hurdle which many people will have to take next year if the withholding tax is finally enacted and has to be met in addition to taxes at enhanced rates on 1942 incomes.

Now there is much to be said for putting people on a current tax basis so that they pay as they receive their incomes and not a year later. In that way spending is checked and the anti-inflationary force of taxation increased. The immediate effect of the Ruml plan would, however, be inflationary, because it would release funds accumulated by prudent citizens in order to meet their tax bills next March. Supporters of Ruml assume that most taxpayers have not finished paying their 1941 taxes and will have to find the cash for next year's levy entirely out of current income. Speaking for myself, I settled in full for 1941 on March 15 last and have since put aside enough money to cover nearly half of next year's probable tax bill. If the Ruml plan went through, I could feel free to spend at least part of that sum, and I would be less than human if I did not use it to insure a more bountiful Christmas for my family than now seems probable. Nor do I think my prudence in this respect is unusual, for an analysis recently published by the SEC shows a sharp increase in individual liquid savings in the second quarter of 1942—that is, after 1941 taxes became due—particularly in the form of bank deposits and cash holdings. This suggests the accumulation of personal tax reserves. Any encouragement to the spending of such savings, particularly at a time when

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inventories of many consumer goods are running low, could have real inflationary significance.

Nor is this the only count against the Ruml plan. More important is the price which must be paid by the Treasury—that is to say, by the common purse of all the people. For there is a price, though Mr. Ruml and his friends use mirrors to disguise the fact: it is the tax bill for 1941, which is to be forgiven—a mere matter of $8 billion. Now it is perfectly true that the Treasury, since it is on a cash basis, will continue to pull in income-tax revenue without interruption and will feel the loss only as taxpayers die and close their income-tax accounts immediately instead of owing a year's income as they do at present. This may rob death of some of its terrors, but it robs the Treasury of hard cash, and burglary committed in instalments over a generation is still burglary.

There is another point to consider: 1941 was a bonanza year for the high-bracket incomes. Civilian production was still going full blast, returning handsome profits, and corporation taxes had not attained their war-time peak. This year total national income will be much greater, but the proportion received by the higher brackets will be less. Hence there are solid advantages for the well-to-do in skipping taxes on 1941 incomes, advantages which may mean not merely increments to their heirs but the actual refund of moneys previously paid out. Let us consider the case of Mr. X, whose tax on his 1941 income amounted to $100,000. At the end of last year Mr. X liquidated a lot of his investments and put the proceeds into tax-exempt bonds. As a result his tax bill on his 1942 income will be only $10,000, and it would appear that if the Ruml plan were adopted he would be entitled to a refund of $90,000. All the newspapers advocating the Ruml plan that I have seen managed to slur over this point.

Mr. Ruml himself has expressed a willingness to have his scheme amended to take care of "windfalls" if some satisfactory way can be found of distinguishing them. I doubt very much if it can, but even if it could, the plan would still be one for relief of the taxpayers at the public expense—in short, a "gimme" scheme.

At the time of writing, the Ruml plan seems to have died in the Senate Finance Committee, but the high-powered propaganda behind it suggests it may be revived. Or if this proves impracticable, we are likely to see new schemes for rendering tax-paying comparatively painless. Unfortunately, there is no known economic anaesthetic capable of doing that job. Wars can no more be paid for by easy stages and financial short cuts than they can be won without taking risks and suffering losses. We shall have to pay and keep on paying no matter how much it hurts, and if we don't pay enough to the Treasury we shall make up by paying inflated prices for everything and, in addition, shall have a still bigger debt problem to struggle with after the war.

In the Wind

IN A RECENT PRIMARY in Contra Costa County, California, the system of "cross filing" produced a strange result. Two candidates sought the nomination of both parties for the same office. The candidate who had always been a Republican lost his own party's nomination but won on the Democratic ticket. The Democrat lost to the Republican in his own primary but won in the other. Now each will have to run on the ticket of the party he actually opposes.

VICTOR RECORDS announces that the most popular song in Argentina is *"En lo Profundo Corazón de Texas."*

WESTROOK PEGLER'S column has been dropped from the Washington *Post,* which has the largest circulation in Washington, and is being published by the Washington *News,* which has the smallest. . . . Eleanor Patterson, publisher of the Washington *Times-Herald* and a bitter critic of Mrs. Roosevelt, was hostess to several delegates to the recent International Student Assembly, an enterprise to which the President's wife devotes much time.

UNITED STATES CENSORS apparently have orders not to let any material on unfair treatment of Negroes in this country reach foreign readers. Subscribers to *The Nation* in South America and elsewhere have sometimes found articles on Negroes cut out of the magazine. A recent item from this column on the beating of Roland Hayes, Negro concert singer, in Rome, Georgia, was scissored from copies going to Mexico.

ON THE MORNING that the Chicago *Tribune* printed the famous story revealing that the navy knew the size of the Japanese force it was to engage off Midway Island, Colonel McCormick realized that his editors had blundered. For perhaps the first time in his life he apologized to his publishing rival, Secretary of the Navy Knox. He immediately dispatched a telegram saying that he was sorry the story had been printed.

THE SOUND TRACK accompanying Universal Newsreel's pictures of Maxim Litvinov greeting one of the young Russian heroes now in this country carries the czarist national anthem.

ELECTRICAL WORLD, a trade journal, reports in one article that the Consolidated Edison of New York is helping the war effort with a series of broadcasts telling how to conform with dim-out regulations and still keep rooms well lighted. On another page it reports that the same company has suffered a loss of 14.5 per cent in the demand for power since the dim-out was ordered.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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BOOKS and the ARTS

Mythology: Western Imagination in the Making

BY IRWIN EDMAN

SCHOLARSHIP and imagination have never been too closely allied in this country. Creative spirits or those who wished to pass as such or whose imagination consisted in their imagining themselves to be such have been notoriously impatient of the pedantries of official academic scholarship. They have resented research in literature and the arts that inquired into everything about a work of art except the qualities that render it precious and unique. Scholars have, on the other hand, been irascible, not without cause, concerning refinements of criticism that are justified by everything but the facts. They have looked with suspicion on flights of generalization that have no evidence to support them, and disdained creative hypotheses made out of the whole cloth of week-end erudition. Scholars have identified imagination with irresponsibility. As for attempts to communicate general ideas to a wider public, they have regarded even the most serious of these as "popularization," to be greeted with something between a shudder and a leer.

These ruminations are suggested by "Mythology," Edith Hamilton's recent book,* which is or ought to be a most delightful lesson for both the poets and scholars of criticism. It is a model, too, of what popularization can be in the hands of a writer both learned and imaginative. The first thing one is tempted to say about "Mythology" is that it is a Bullfinch for our time. But that is hardly a description, even a suggestion, of what Miss Hamilton has done. In a prose at once edged and colorful, she has thrown the whole of even familiar Greek and Norse mythology into a fresh and luminous context. She has never overpressed suggestions and intimations. She has distilled into incidental observations the whole meaning of mythology itself to the modern scholar and man of letters. Though there is hardly a footnote, every page is a condensation of literary and anthropological learning.

She has woven skilfully into the very body of her text, always without heaviness, the sources of the various legends, and even indicated in brief, telling epithets their relative weight and importance. What emerges, especially in the case of Greek mythology—which occupies seven-eighths of the book—is a picture, both exact and exciting, of the world of Hellenic imagination. Miss Hamilton's study is more than a lively guidebook of gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines of the Greek and Norse world. It is a wise discourse on mythology itself, and shows what can happen when love and erudition animate a gifted writer to communicate the necessary elements of a complex and noble subject.

In a paragraph, for instance, Miss Hamilton succeeds in placing the world of Greek myths:

> That is the miracle of Greek mythology, a humanized world, men free from the paralyzing fear of an omnipotent unknown. The terrifying incomprehensibilities which were worshiped elsewhere, and the fearsome spirits with which earth, air, and sea swarmed, were banned from Greece. It may seem odd to say that the men who made the myths disliked the irrational and had a love for facts, but it is true, no matter how wildly fantastic some of the myths are. Any one who reads them with attention discovers that even the most nonsensical take place in a world which is essentially rational and matter of fact. Hercules, whose life was one long combat against preposterous monsters, is always said to have had his home in the city of Thebes. The exact spot where Aphrodite was born of the foam could be visited by any ancient tourist; it was just offshore from the Island of Cytherea. . . . The "Odyssey" speaks of "the divine for which all men long," and hundreds of years later Aristotle wrote "excellence much labored for by the race of mortals." The Greeks from the earliest mythologist had a perception of the divine and excellent. Their longing for them was great enough to make them never give up seeing them clearly, until at last the thunder and lightning were changed into the Universal Father.

One has only to read Miss Hamilton's account of Zeus, his history and his literary transformations, to see how much she has crowded of truth and of relevant poetry into that last sentence.

Our author is equally delightful and equally cool in letting us know or reminding us, where we have forgotten, what are the dominant sources of the literary tradition of the Greek stories. She is accurate and engaging, for example, on the subject of Ovid. "Occasionally stories familiar to us through literature and art have come down to us only in his pages. In this book I have avoided using him as far as possible. Undoubtedly he was a good poet and a good storyteller and able to appreciate the myths, to realize what excellent material they afforded him, but he was really farther away from them in his point of view than we are today."

Miss Hamilton does not, with Ovid, regard the myths as ancient poets' monstrous lies. She does not consider them as sheer nonsense. She constructs her account of them mostly out of the Greek writers themselves: out of Homer, who saw the gods with the vision of the directest of poets, in an atmosphere of radiance, courtliness, lustiness, and splendor, even in their cruelty and lies. She sees the myths as Hesiod saw them, stories of the creation of the universe and the generation of the gods, explanations in answer to the question how everything happened, stories to still wonder by satisfying it with logical history. She sees them in the moralized reasonableness of the tragedians, in the philosophical transformations of Plato. Her book places the myths properly where they belong, as both early literature and early science. She does all this in eighteen pages which are as good examples as one could wish of the difference between being brief and being superficial.

Reading this book gives anyone familiar with Greek literature the pleasure of recognition, of many recognitions sharply focused in the discrimination of a connoisseur

* Little, Brown and Company. $3.50.

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scholar. It will give those wishing to find their way an index to what their reading of the Greek writers themselves will substantiate and amplify. One feels throughout that one is in the hands of a guide who, when she does simplify, is always careful to imply the delicate recesses and by-waters of her subject. Thus, in speaking in summary at the close of her discussion of Demeter: "The Olympians were the happy gods, the deathless gods, far removed from suffering mortals destined to die. But in their grief and at the hour of death, men could turn for compassion to the goddess who sorrowed and the goddess who died."

Hardly anyone could do better for a brief account than Miss Hamilton does with the House of Atreus or the House of Thebes. Our author is not too completely the summarist to make felicitous suggestions. For example, she does so when she notes Euripides giving the story of Iphigenia a happy ending: "A possible reason for this lapse on the part of one of the greatest poets the world has known is that the Athenians who were suffering greatly at the time from the war with Sparta, were eager for miracles and that Euripides chose to humor them." One could draw a contemporary moral if one wished to, but Miss Hamilton is too fastidious to do so.

Best of all for many readers will be the minor and neglected myths retold with succinct art; so that the narratives are little poems rather than summaries in a dictionary. Those who remember only Bottom's horseplay in Shakespeare will be surprised at the tenderness and beauty of the myth of Pyramus and Thisbe.

The section on Norse mythology is too brief. It is twenty pages long. In a way it hardly belongs in the same book at all, though it is remarkable as a clear compression of tortuous materials. Nor is Miss Hamilton at home in the subject in the same way as she is with the Greeks. She admits, for instance, that she judges the style of the ancient Norse legends from translation. But she does succeed in conveying a summary image of that strange somber world. Of it she says, "All the best Northern tales are tragic, about men and women who go steadfastly forward to meet death, often deliberately choose it, even plan it long beforehand. The only light in the darkness is heroism." Even the gods know that a day will come when they must be destroyed.

One wishes that Miss Hamilton had developed a little bit more her theme of the persistence, however transmuted, of the romantic fatalism of the Norse mythology—often disguised as the Christianity which never quite destroyed it—in both the English and German heritage. "For Norse mythology and Greek mythology together give a clear picture of what the people were like from whom comes a major part of our spiritual and intellectual inheritance." Her book is a study of the European imagination in the making. It has had a lot to do with what J. H. Randall, Jr., has called "the making of the modern mind." There is a saying in the Elder Edda: The mind knows only what has lain near the heart. What has lain near the Western heart and has been spoken in a thousand modulations of poetry, art, and music is here retold with grace, economy, and wit. The scholar and the writer meet in these pages to the edification of other writers and scholars and for the initiation of the common readers in their common unrealized heritage.

The Problem of Sovereignty

THE PRINCIPLES OF POWER. By Guglielmo Ferrero. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.50.

FERRERO'S renown as a historian has long since been established. In recent years his historical inquiries have tended to become merely the occasion for more systematic reflections on the meaning of certain aspects of history. In seeking to satisfy the interest of both philosopher and historian he adopted the strategy of using a limited field of historical study as a basis for an inquiry into the meaning of larger trends of history. Thus his recently published "Reconstruction of Europe" was on the one hand a study of the Congress of Vienna and on the other hand a comparative analysis of revolutionary and constructive statecraft. Napoleon served as symbol of the former, and Talleyrand was made—not too plausibly—the embodiment of the latter.

His posthumous volume uses the French Revolution as the historical locus for an inquiry into the problem of government. Only two slight excursions, one into Roman and the other into recent Italian history, take him beyond this particular domain. But his real interest is not so much the French Revolution as the problem of "legitimate" government. He is seeking to determine how governments can be sufficiently stable and secure to obviate the necessity of maintaining themselves by force and fear. His analysis of this problem is rich in valuable insights which we could accept more gratefully if he made a wider sweep into history to substantiate his conclusions and if he were a little more modest in assessing the importance of his thesis. He seems to think that he is the first to have penetrated into the mysteries of government and found the secret of what makes it "click."

His thesis is that there are only two forms of "legitimate" government—the aristo-monarchic and the democratic; that the mark of legitimacy is uncoerced consent; that habit and tradition prompt consent in the former case and explicit forms of suffrage in the latter; that governments which lack these forms of legitimacy are driven by the fear of the people to maintain themselves by fraud and inordinate force; that modern history is dominated by a struggle between these two types of legitimacy.

The main foundation of this thesis is a rather neat device. The connotation of the word "legitimate" is extended on the one hand so that it becomes relevant not only to governments based on heredity but to democratic governments as well; on the other hand the moral connotation of the word "legitimate" is made to cover not merely democratic but hereditary governments. The important point is that the government be accepted by the people so that the fear of possible revolt will not preoccupy the ruler and tempt him to use terror as the means of survival. There is only one form of "illegitimate" government—one that uses force and fraud to survive. Lacking the implicit consent of the people, it is in fear of the people and consequently rules by prompting the people to fear its power. Ferrero's analysis of this vicious circle of fear in tyrannical government is psychologically very astute. There are also "pre-legitimate" governments, primarily revolutionary ones, which must use inordinate force until they have established themselves but which intend to rule upon the basis of principles that will finally win the

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consent of the people. There are also "quasi-legitimate" governments." They pretend to use one principle of sovereignty when in reality they are based upon another.

Perhaps the most valuable insight for modern men in the author's main thesis is the recognition that non-democratic governments must not be too simply identified with tyranny. Hereditary governments in which habit and tradition, the personalization of loyalty and the reverence for majesty, prompted by the panoply of the state, all combine to win the implicit consent of the subject may be creative forms of statecraft. Hereditary government actually implies a democratic principle in so far as it rests upon consent. On the other hand, even the most explicit forms of democracy are connected with a traditional principle, since only habit and tradition can make them absolutely secure by freeing them of the fear that the people might use their suffrage to annul the democratic principle.

The primary weakness of Ferrero's analysis lies in his inability to grasp, or to do justice to, all the complex economic and social factors which have contributed to the decay of hereditary and the rise of democratic governments. He seems to think that our modern instabilities are derived primarily from the conflict between the two principles of sovereignty. He admits that the two may be united and made to support each other, as has been the case in the constitutional monarchies of Europe, particularly Britain, Holland, and the Scandinavian countries. But he casts only a glance at this possibility. Occasionally he suggests that the complexities of modern civilization make democracy preferable to hereditary rule, because democracy arms all the various elements in society with political power and thereby insures a consideration of their interests in the harmony of the whole; while governments based purely upon heredity must also maintain a traditional social order which must progressively defy new dynamic elements in the social equilibrium.

On the whole, however, he is not interested in measuring the comparative merits of the two types of sovereignty. He is convinced that no government is sufficiently just to be able to preserve itself merely by commending itself to the conscience of its subjects. It must count upon some irrational force of habit or reverence to overpower the natural reluctance of people to endow their rulers with sufficient power to maintain order.

This not unjustified but rather extravagant note of skepticism about the problem of justice persuades Ferrero to regard the sudden collapse of the old regime of France, after the fall of the Bastille, as one of the great mysteries of history. It had authority only yesterday, and today its sovereignty is completely annulled, leaving, he says, a political vacuum. How can we explain such a mystery? The concept of justice might be of help here. Men may accept even an unjust government out of habit and tradition; but its injustices may pile up conscious and unconscious resentments which become fully conscious and dynamic the moment some open defiance acts as a match for the smoldering tinder.

There are indeed mysteries in the phenomena of the sovereignty and majesty of governments and in the implicit and explicit consent which people yield to their rulers, but the whole field of inquiry is not quite so occult as Ferrero seems to imagine.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

Report from the Near East

RETREAT TO VICTORY. By Allan A. Michie. Alliance Book Corporation. $3.

LIFELINES OF VICTORY. By Squadron Leader Murray Harris. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.

RECENTLY a bad "correspondent's book" provoked me to say that at this date a war correspondent's manuscript must possess certain very special qualities to be worthy of print. I was, I think, too liberal in that I included a brilliant style among the printworthy qualities, and I begin to doubt whether Mr. Werth's "Moscow War Diary" is as good as I once thought. Knocking out style, then, as a quality of both good and bad books of this sort, grasp of historical process and an abundance of useful information are the two characteristics that alone should put a war correspondent's manuscript between stiff covers. On the first count Mr. Michie scores about fifty out of a hundred, and on the second about seventy-five or seventy-five plus. For the rest, "Retreat to Victory" is a streamlined, high-powered job of journalism in the Lucian school, superb in its sort, lean, swift, and graphic, though a little too much given to thumbnail portraits of everyone above the rank of major.

Very definitely Mr. Michie is not a boy on stilts shouting "Look at me," nor is he a *Collier's* Siegfried mooing for the love of schoolgirls. He is outspoken, and has the courage to say, for example, that for this country, and in general, civilian defense is a more or less useless luxury and bad for morale. He is critical and informative about fatuous incompetents in colonial offices. His contempt for "base rats"—Auchinleck is reported to have packed 600 of 700 staff officers off to the front when he took over Cairo from Wavell—equals the "base rats' " dislike of fighting men. He is frank about the incomprehensible blunders committed in local campaigns, but he shows his close-grained common sense in not drawing the false conclusion that British strategy has been basically wrong. Indeed, it is his belief in the soundness of Mr. Churchill's direction that gives his book its somewhat misleading title. Mr. Michie is aware that history is full of blitzkrieg victors who have lost their long wars. And "too little and too late," about which we had small choice, must not give way to "too little and too soon," about which we have some power of decision.

But if these were its only merits, "Retreat to Victory" would not be worth five or six hours of a sensible man's time. It happens, however, that Mr. Michie has seen a great deal of the war in the Near East, a region in which censorship has been absolutely ruthless. What Mr. Michie has to say about the political and military activities of the United Nations in this part of the world forces one to protest once more against the absurdities of imperialism. In the last war the Allies betrayed the Arabs, as Lawrence bitterly charged, or they kept their promises only when violent revolution compelled them to, as in Iraq. In this war, therefore, we must constantly dread a "stab in the back" from the peoples on whose territory we fight. The weakness of the conservative outlook is particularly evident in the behavior of the Free French during the Syrian campaign. De Gaulle and his staff were so naively confident that the Vichy troops would welcome deliverance that at the zero hour the Free French forces

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crossed the Syrian frontier headed by a band playing the Marseillaise. The instant reply was sounded by instruments that repeat their one note 460 times per minute. The Vichy French, who are real imperialists, fought savagely, while the Free French, whose philosophy is not yet clear, "had no stomach for rough stuff" and were far inferior to the colored troops of British India.

Thus, to pit our Frenchmen against their Frenchmen without contrasting our France with their France is an act of political naivete. It is almost like offering to varnish the pictures in Spanish art galleries as a device for keeping Franco neutral rather than doing something to increase the Spanish dictator's fear of his people, which, with our growing might, is what keeps him out of war. As it is, it is the Axis which too often, as in Egypt, utilizes the revolutionary appeal. The wretched *fellahin,* to whom Berlin and Rome promise land, are often pro-Axis, while the rich rabble of Cairo are pro-British. Again, Mr. Michie tells us that the British needed to raise their voices quite a lot to persuade the Free French to honor pre-campaign promises of limited independence for the peoples of Syria and Lebanon. Britain, that is to say, correctly insists that the Free French cede ground, but fails to apply that logic in India. One can estimate the influence which the inevitable Vichy comment must have upon those Frenchmen who, for lack of the social vision we do not ourselves display, cannot make up their minds to turn against Pétain and Laval. Mr. Michie, by the way, feels consternation at the State Department's policy toward Vichy, which, he positively asserts, has provided the Afrika Korps with war materials.

Mr. Michie's book is only incidentally a defense of Churchill strategy. Squadron Leader Harris's "Lifelines of Victory" was definitely written as a counter-blast to the second-front-now school. It is not much of a blast. The author's thesis is contained in the words of an undistinguished German general, "Strategy is the study of communications." We have ultimate superiority in productive resources and in man-power, the author agrees; therefore, so long as we maintain our lines of communication, the odds are with us. That one believes to be true, and it would be conclusive if victory necessarily went by odds. But there are so many other relevant questions to which the author does not give convincing answers that the book fails to impress this reviewer—who does not himself take any part in the second-front-now campaign. As a brief study of the worldwide communication lines in our control it is interesting, but even here the absence of any quantitative estimates robs it of force.

RALPH BATES

Childe Nicolas

CONFOUND THE WISE. By Nicolas Calas. Arrow Editions. $3.

THIS explosively vivifying book was needed. Criticism of the arts has become so much a specialists' affair—music for the musicologists, literature the semanticists' charnel house—that one almost forgets it could ever inspire a *Weltanschauung.* Who among the dwarf Aristotles and doubting St. Thomases will interpret the totality of art and life, present and past, in the light of positive immediate values? Where is a Ruskin for painting, a Nietzsche for drama, even a Pater or Spengler for culture in general? Mr. Calas may not be the answer, but he has at least attempted to be.

A Greek poet and pilgrim through the modern world, now based in New York, he began criticism some years ago in Paris with "Foyers d'Incendie," which might be rendered "The Incendiary at Home." The present work is the second in a series of four, the two to come being "Transfiguration" and "The Fate of Jocasta and the Destiny of Prometheus." His books are not treatises—that too is fortunate—but groups of free variations on one theme: the artist as rebel and prophet. The variations are classified under the roomiest of headings; the framework may be ignored, the parts have a life of their own. Of the present work the first section, entitled Time, is the best. A discussion of poetry as prophecy, revelation, stimulus to action, it greatly advances the often bungled synthesis of Marxism and psychoanalysis as instruments of evaluation. Ranging through Occidental poetry, Calas points out the parallel between poetic sublimations of the individual's desire for richer inner life and the social will to change. This avoids the two major traps of contemporary criticism: the Marxist tendency to judge in mere terms of social content (Dickens "greater" than Proust), and the anti-romantic, neo-Aristotelian view that literature is under some moral obligation to assuage rather than sharpen discontent.

Calas also rightly condemns—though here he is not quite fair to the exception of Jung—the tendency in psychoanalysis itself to treat the artist's cry of discontent as a clinical phenomenon, a "maladjustment," when the disease is in society rather than in the artist. He sums up: "One listens well only to that which leads to action." Defining "action" leads to difficulties of course, since in his view it seems to include any imaginative storm and stress induced by surrealist art, provided it is good art—for example, Tanguy not Dali. But the difficulties are rewarding, not simply vexatious, especially as they lead Calas to some excellent remarks on surrealism, his championship of which is unusually discriminating, and to a superb manifesto on poetry as heroism. In the remaining three sections he discourses on baroque art in Portugal, his own recent experience of that country, the aesthetics of portraiture, and New York as a culture symbol. Here disproportion sets in and the argument is frequently labyrinthine, especially when he needlessly introduces Portuguese baroque by a great slab of Portuguese history seemingly cribbed from a very dull textbook. But suggestive reflections, comparisons, analogies abound. Calas's richly associative mind is in refreshing contrast with our critical Alexandrians, close interpreters of single texts. His restatement of romantic doctrine in twentieth-century terms is one of the most fruitful contributions to criticism in America since Babbitt's "Rousseau and Romanticism," and makes a welcome counterblast to that masterpiece of misapplied intellect. Regrettably, it lacks an index, and it sometimes reads like French homework by a sixth-grader weak in English grammar. "Expose" for "expound," "moeures" for "mores," "lanced" for "launched," etc., with quantities of misspelled names and plural subjects with singular verbs, are blemishes that need not have occurred.

FRANK JONES

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Four Recent Novels

TELEGRAM FROM HEAVEN. By Arnold Manoff. The Dial Press. $2.50.

NEARER THE EARTH. By Beatrice Borst. Random House. $2.50.

THE WHITE QUEEN. By Betty Baur. The Viking Press. $2.50.

A TIME TO BE BORN. By Dawn Powell. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.75.

BESIDES the accident of being published in the same month, the four novels brought together in this review have in common their intellectual decency and their effort to deal intelligently with modern life. While none of the four is wholly successful, all four are readable and each has merit. In better literary times books like these might not warrant special enthusiasm, but in the current flood of Civil War novels and frontier novels, novels about a single river in Georgia or a single acre in Mississippi, they take on life-saving disproportions simply because they try, each in its own way, to cope with the world of their authors', and readers', experience. It may be significant that three of the four are first novels and their authors are young.

Arnold Manoff's "Telegram from Heaven" will remind you of Clifford Odets's "Awake and Sing." Although it has not the ingenuity of detail of Mr. Odets's first and best play, it surveys the same territory, the Jewish Bronx, from much the same point of view, well left of center. It has the same awareness that the lives of its poor Jews are part of a larger political picture and the same essential vagueness about what is to be done about it. But a lot of water has flowed under the bridge since Odets made his first appearance, and if the author of "Awake and Sing" hadn't the war to complicate his problem, the author of "Telegram from Heaven" uses the war both to complicate and solve his problem too easily. Before Pearl Harbor, for instance, what Sylvia Singer, Manoff's heroine, was waiting for was the right feller with the right prospects and the right bank account; after Pearl Harbor her telegram from heaven is her boy friend's draft call to fight for democracy. One is tempted to ask Mr. Manoff, "And after the armistice, what then?" Even with all the political breaks on her side, and obviously she deserves them, one suspects Sylvia Singer will still want to be Hedy Lamarr; it is a limitation that her author resolves her dilemma so crudely in terms of the present. But Mr. Manoff's writing gifts are worth notice. Like Odets, he has a feeling heart and a beautifully accurate ear for the harsh poetry of American-Jewish speech (attention, Mr. Kober, on both counts). There are half a dozen scenes—the moment in which Sylvia's friend Francey breaks down and confesses her sexual fears, and the interviews between Sylvia and her Riverside Drive employers—that have the sure touch of creativity. Mr. Manoff deals even more truthfully with his secondary characters and situations than he does with his hero and heroine, a sign of grace, certainly, in a beginning, or any, novelist.

Miss Borst won first prize in the Avery Hopwood competition with her novel called "Nearer the Earth." A far cry from the Bronx of "Telegram from Heaven," "Nearer the Earth" is the biography of a nice spoiled child brought up in a comfortable home in a comfortable medium-sized city; even the genteel poverty which confronts Karen Greenwald after her father's death is luxury compared to Sylvia Singer's one step from the relief rolls. Yet Karen's problem too is the problem of how to grow up and face reality; in her case maturity is made difficult by an oversheltered childhood. The "reality" her author concocts for her unfortunately has one too many deaths to be convincing, and for all her efforts at self-education, Karen Greenwald never develops into an interesting personality. Nevertheless, Miss Borst's story has many virtues. It is written with great good taste in a style that neither inflates nor whines, it is poignant without being tremulous, and for a first novel in which author and heroine are closely related, it is remarkably objective—so objective, actually, that one is never quite sure whether it is Miss Borst or Miss Greenwald who peters out in the end. What one feels most strongly is that Miss Borst needs to enlarge her range of seeing and thinking. It isn't so much that her world is so small as that she moves in it as if it were a cloister, by which I don't mean that, like so many women writers (see Gladys Schmitt's "Gates of Aulis" or Ann Chidester's "Young Pandora" for recent examples), Miss Borst thinks she is a priestess. In fact, her lack of self-exaltation is one of her outstanding distinctions.

The most interesting as well as the most uneven of these three first novels is Betty Baur's "The White Queen," which at moments is so skilful as to astonish you, at moments so skilful as to seem machine-made, and then again—as in the timing of the heroine's change of heart—not skilful at all. Much more ambitious than either Mr. Manoff or Miss Borst, Miss Baur divides her attention almost equally among several characters, interweaving their lives to the better understanding of each of them. The story is set in England in 1937, while Spain is fighting its war to determine all future wars, and the heroine is an American girl married to a well-placed Englishman. In the course of discovering the connection between her own destiny and the destiny of the world Deborah Abbott falls out of love with her husband and into love with an impecunious radical. Politics and social conflict, in other words, boil down to one woman's choice between two men—after all, a perfectly good way to write about world events in fiction; and amusingly enough, it is only when Miss Baur's social conscience gets the upper hand and she steps out of the realm of emotion to describe the practical workings of her Workers' Party or her Tenants' Association that she sounds naive. Miss Baur's real gift is her energy, her enormous zest for what things look like and how people are, individually and in disharmony with each other. And if, as one sometimes thinks, there was once a day when novels like "The White Queen," about pleasant articulate young men and women trying to make the right kind of lives for themselves and having vital relationships with one another, might have been expected to be the least common denominator of first novels, Miss Baur's book makes one wistful for it.

And then there is Dawn Powell, who is no first novelist, of course, and who should need no introduction to *Nation* readers. Miss Powell, one of the wittiest women around, suggests the answer to the old question, "Who really makes

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the jokes that Dorothy Parker gets the credit for?" The central figure of "A Time to Be Born"—you certainly can't call her the heroine—is the fabulous Amanda Keeler Evans, blond and beautiful, the author of a successful novel and the wife of a publishing power; she knows exactly what she wants, which is everything, and she is in a fair way to getting it. The world is her oyster, and the war, on which she is solemnly articulate, is the perfect break for her career. A ruthless debunking and the quintessence of cattiness, Miss Powell's book is at least one instance in which female venom becomes a social force-for-good. She cries out to be quoted, not one sentence at a time, either, like "A gypsy should be required to be wrong, or else she becomes an affront to science," or "She was thirty-two, but she looked like a woman of forty so well-preserved she could pass for thirty-two," but whole paragraphs and pages. Her description of the women's-magazine formula for how to cure a broken heart, her picture of women girding themselves for war, her analysis of contemporary literary trends are not only funny; they proclaim the educated, no-nonsense intelligence that lies behind them. It all adds up to a first-rate satiric talent, and one wonders what went wrong for "A Time to Be Born" to fall apart as it does in the middle. Perhaps it is because there is no proper satiric tradition nowadays for Miss Powell to work in; so that she loses heart and dubs in, as a backdrop to her satire, the kind of love story—nice little small-town girl wins away the great big tough newspaperman from the glamorous big-time beauty—that she would be the first to ridicule. At any rate, the wee note of cynicism she introduces into her love idyl doesn't save it.

DIANA TRILLING

Civilian Front

CIVILIAN DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES. By Colonel R. Ernest Dupuy and Lieutenant Hodding Carter. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

HANDBOOK OF CIVILIAN PROTECTION. Prepared by the Civilian Defense Council, College of the City of New York. Whittlesey House. $1.25.

ARMS AND THE PEOPLE. By Alden Stevens. Harper and Brothers. $2.75.

IN THE United States the problem of civilian defense is of less importance than in Europe only because our geographical position greatly decreases the danger of air attacks. Raids by limited numbers of planes from enemy carriers are possible, and some of our coastal points are quite likely to be bombed unless the enemy concludes that the chances of doing damage are not worth the risks. To less direct forms of attack we are distinctly vulnerable.

The government of the United States has already made unprecedented demands on civilians and will and must make many others. The reason for such demands is well explained in "Civilian Defense of the United States," which gives an excellent and complete account of the efforts now under way to weld Americans into a disciplined whole for the sake of victory. In the twenty-one chapters full consideration is given to all phases of aerial attack, gas protection, fire fighting, first aid, evacuation, health and welfare, sabotage, enemy propaganda, morale, and other pertinent topics. The explanation of our defense program is both full and lucid. A reader of this book can discover not only what is necessary to civilian defense but why it is necessary, and be enthusiastic in undertaking the program. A long list of practical suggestions of ways open to civilians to aid the defense effort and an impressive bibliography complete the book.

"Handbook of Civilian Protection," prepared under the sponsorship of New York's City College, is exactly what the name implies, a textbook of civilian defense. Much less complete in its scope than "Civilian Defense of the United States," it is mainly concerned with the problem of dealing with air raids, only secondarily with conservation and health, and not at all with such problems as enemy propaganda. However, it gives singularly thorough treatment to those problems which it does consider and is an adequate guide to ordinary situations. Air-raid wardens, auxiliary firemen and policemen, and the average citizen are told exactly what principles underlie the most effective use of their talents and how best to perform needed services. Certain rules of action are expected to be memorized by the student. This little booklet or its equivalent should be in the hands of defense volunteers in such of the larger American cities as are vulnerable to aerial attack.

Easily the most readable of these volumes is "Arms and the People." Instead of giving attention to minute details of defense it describes the broad and far-reaching changes which the war effort has already brought and is still bringing to the United States. Boom towns, priorities, mining, farming, modern housing, and improvement in the machinery of production are only a few of the subjects treated in what is a much more valuable volume than might appear at first glance. The author, a free-lance magazine writer, bases his book upon extensive travel and numerous contacts in all parts of the United States. His comments on army camps and their surroundings and on the problems created by placing millions of men in new environments are especially keen. He believes that the cleanliness, improved diet, and regular habits engendered by army life far outweigh increased prostitution and other evils. This optimism is typical of the author. Although Mr. Stevens does not overlook such serious future questions as demobilization and the post-war change-over of industry, he is far more impressed by the improvements in Southern agriculture growing out of the war, by the demonstration of the needlessness of industrial depressions, and by technological advances. "Arms and the People" is written in a popular style, but it is by no means superficial.

DONALD W. MITCHELL

In Early Issues of The Nation

Constance Rourke in the Reviewers' Den
BY MARGARET MARSHALL

"The Real Italians" by Carlo Sforza
REVIEWED BY GAETANO SALVEMINI

The Poetry of José García Villa
REVIEWED BY MARIANNE MOORE

Virginia Woolf as Critic
BY LOUIS KRONENBERGER

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IN BRIEF

I LOVE YOU, I LOVE YOU, I LOVE YOU. By Ludwig Bemelmans. The Viking Press. $2.50.

Not Bemelmans at his best, but even Bemelmans at his second best is better than most and still the only writer who can produce two such consecutive sentences as: "She wore a little mink coat on deck—the only junior mink I have ever seen. The way the young widow managed her entrances into the dining-room reminded me of Easter at the Music Hall." Among these stories you'll especially enjoy Souvenir, the recollections of two trips on the Normandie, and Bride of Berchtesgaden, the account of Bemelmans's encounter with the Gestapo. The author's illustrations are, as always, all you would—or could—expect.

THE DAYS OF OFELIA. By Gertrude Diamant. Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.75.

Neither a novel nor a guidebook, Miss Diamant's story of Ofelia, the little girl whose family were Miss Diamant's neighbors in Mexico City, is a pleasant, informative record of one person's living and traveling in Mexico. Ofelia was only ten, but she insisted upon becoming the American lady's maid. While Miss Diamant tried to teach her Mexican neighbor the virtues of booklearning and vitamins, Ofelia gave her mistress an inside view of native life—a happy way for a visitor to become acquainted with a foreign land, and a happy device for writing about it. A Book-of-the-Month Club selection.

THE STONES BEGIN TO DANCE. By Aben Kandel. Duell, Sloan, and Pearce. $2.

Mr. Kandel's novel is a whimsey in simple bad taste about life under the Williamsburg Bridge. Its central character is Mr. Marco, a Rumanian pushcart peddler who has read too many novels by Robert Nathan, and the story demonstrates that poor people are always sweet, simple, and good, and rich people always greedy and pompous—except those who got their start in life in the pushcart market. As dénouement, there is a gathering of all these once humble, now wealthy, good souls at the legal closing of the market to commend Mr. Marco for his loyalty to the old way of life and to be present at his affecting death. Unquestionably a book on the side of democracy. Also a good example of the Hollywood political theory that a few words from an eccentric character can solve most social problems.

DACEY HAMILTON. By Dorothy Van Doren. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

Dorothy Van Doren's new novel is largely concerned with the newspaper profession in 1918. Her heroine, Dacey Hamilton (at twenty-seven, she is a widow and the mother of five children), works for a liberal weekly, and the hero (he has the astonishing name of Urian Oakes) is a Vermont boy making his way on Park Row. Inevitably there is a good deal of talk about what is going on in a world at war. It is good talk and should help us to understand what is going on in a world at war today.

SEE HERE, PRIVATE HARGROVE. By Marion Hargrove. Henry Holt and Company. $2.

Corporal Hargrove (he was promoted) has written a delightful book about the trials and tribulations of a rookie. We recommend it as an antidote for those who worry about their boys in our army camps. The book also contains much sage advice which every draftee would do well to heed. We hope that Corporal Hargrove will continue to keep us informed about army life. He can do more to popularize it than any number of official army reports. His book is well adapted for reading aloud.

GOETHE AND THE GREEKS. By Humphry Trevelyan. The Macmillan Company. $3.75.

Recent advances in archaeological and historical knowledge and a widening of our view of other great cultures have shed new light on the Greeks and placed them in a new perspective. We cannot see the Greeks as Goethe did; but since his Hellenism was fundamentally "an effort to establish the basis of values upon which European civilization has been built," it "is not to be judged by its historical truth but by its vital force." This scholarly volume is therefore a highly important means both of keeping our perspective on Goethe right and of revitalizing our own view of the Greek ideal. By following a biographical method Mr. Trevelyan presents Goethe's view of the Greeks as many-sided, dynamic, and developing to the very end of his life, and shows how it can go on developing as our horizon changes.

OIL, BLOOD, AND SAND: STAKES AND STRATEGY IN THE MIDDLE EAST. By Robert L. Baker. Appleton-Century Company. $2.50.

Probably the most important phrase in this book is the following: "30,000,000 barrels of good crude would be sufficient to relieve Germany of all strain over all fuel and lubricants." It may be a coincidence, but this estimate is exactly the production of the Maikop and Grozny oil fields in the North Caucasus. The Nazis have captured the first and are well on their way toward the second. The author holds out no hope that the destruction of the wells by the retreating Red Army will seriously hamper the Nazis. He claims that the Germans have assembled vast amounts of drilling equipment in eastern Poland and Rumania for use in the Caucasus. He points out that the North Caucasas oil fields are rather shallow and that Texas drillers have brought in shallow wells in as little as seven days. So it seems that the Germans really have no need to drive on to Iran and Iraq and will probably attempt to establish a defensive winter line in the North Caucasus. The major part of this book, however, is devoted to the countries of the Middle East, their peoples and the problems of their defense. Mr. Baker knows how to separate the facts from the headlines in a mass of clippings and tell an integrated story. But the book suffers by comparison with "Retreat to Victory" by Allan Michie, who had the advantage of recent personal observation.

ANTHOLOGY OF CANADIAN POETRY (ENGLISH). Compiled by Ralph Gustafson. Pelican Books. 25 cents.

This anthology, 56 poets, 129 poems, begins with writers born around 1850, and ends with a young man of 22. The best known names are those of Constance Lindsay Skinner, Bliss Carman, Sir Charles G. D. Roberts, John McCrae (who is represented by only one poem), and the vastly overrated Wilson MacDonald; the best poets are Raymond Knister, A. M. Klein, and, decidedly, A. J. M. Smith. The anthologist, Ralph Gustafson, has attempted to make his principle of selection not "Canadianism" but artistic merit. The poems should give pleasure, he says; he seems rather easily pleased. The earlier Canadian poets in commemorating nature or expressing patriotic sentiments were influenced by Browning and Tennyson, surprisingly little by Kipling and

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Service, once in a while by Rossetti and Swinburne, a good deal by contemporary magazine verse. There is quite a lot of the I-lift-mine-eyes-to-gaze sort of thing. Those born later, around the turn of the century—almost none seem to have been engendered in the '90's—also pay attention to contemporary magazines, notably *Poetry*, and to the Imagists; they have hardly noticed Hardy, Hopkins, Housman, Yeats, Eliot, or Auden. Mr. Gustafson has included biographical and bibliographical notes on the poets, and on himself likewise, with a portrait by way of frontispiece. He has also included five poems of his own, as generous a number as he has given anyone else with the exception of Messrs. Knister and Smith—though he has given Klein and E. J. Pratt more pages. The example of Untermeyer to the contrary, anthologists should not do this. On the whole, while the anthology does not lack interest, and the price commends it, one rather hopes there is more to Canadian poetry than this, and that somebody better informed and with nicer taste than Mr. Gustafson will find and prove it.

RIVER ROGUE. By Brainard Cheney. Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

The rogue of Mr. Cheney's title is "Snake" Sutton, who discovers when he is only a kid that his mother isn't all she should be, and runs away to live among the Negroes. Sensitive but tough, he becomes a river rat, a raftsman on the Georgia rivers—the kind of glamorous villain who bites off his opponent's thumb in a fight; later, he conquers land life as well. A colorful exploration of hitherto uncharted literary territory—if that is what you look for in a novel.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED

Wartime Price Control. By George P. Adams, Jr. American Council on Public Affairs. $3.

The American Ballot. By Spencer D. Albright. American Council on Public Affairs. $2.50.

This Land We Defend. By Hugh H. Bennett and William C. Pryor. Longmans, Green. $1.50.

Liberty and Learning. By Davis Edison Bunting. American Council on Public Affairs. $3.

Politics and Political Organizations in America. By Theodore W. Cousens. Macmillan. $4.

Civilian Health in Wartime. By Dr. Francis R. Dieuaide. Harvard. $2.50.

The Future of Industrial Man. By Peter F. Drucker. John Day. $2.50.

The Best American Short Stories, 1942. Edited by Martha Foley. Houghton Mifflin. $2.75.

Lost Chords: The Diverting Story of American Popular Songs. By Douglas Gilbert. Doubleday, Doran. $3.50.

Strategic Materials in Hemisphere Defense. By M. S. Hessel, Walter Murphy, and F. A. Hessel. Hastings House. $2.50.

The Merchant Service Today. By Leslie Howe. Oxford. $1.75.

Education for Democratic Survival. By Walter E. Myer and Clay Coss. Civic Education Service. $1.50.

Industrial Concentration and Price Inflexibility. By Alfred C. Neal. American Council on Public Affairs. $3.25.

Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas. By Clifford R. Shaw and Henry D. McKay. Chicago University. $4.50.

The Chorale Preludes of J. S. Bach. By Stanton DeB. Taylor. Oxford. $2.25.

Nazi Guide to Nazism. Edited by Rolf Tell. American Council on Public Affairs. $2.

The Native Labor Problem of South Africa. By J. M. Tinley. North Carolina. $3.

The Bible Is Human. By Louis Wallis. Columbia University. $2.50.

They Were Expendable. By W. L. White. Harcourt, Brace. $2.

How Wars Are Fought. By Captain J. E. A. Whitman. Oxford. $1.75.

RECORDS

ANOTHER of Beethoven's "Rasumovsky" Quartets Op. 59 is at hand on records, this time as the outstanding piece of music on Victor's September list. It is the second of the group—with its powerful, violent, dramatic first movement, its richly elaborated and poignant slow movement; it is performed by the Coolidge Quartet with impeccable technical finish, with excellent musical understanding and taste, with vigor and spirit; and the performance is well recorded (Set 919, $4.73). But good as this version is, it hasn't the warmth and luminous beauty of blended sound, the richness and subtlety of inflection, the incandescence of integrated progression of the Budapest Quartet version in Victor Set 340. And with Victor withdrawing Budapest Quartet performances of Beethoven's Op. 18 No. 3 and Mozart's K. 400 one must hope it will not withdraw that magnificent performance of Beethoven's Op. 59 No. 2, among others.

Strauss's "Don Juan," in which his brilliant powers are to be heard and enjoyed in their youthful vigor, is at hand in a Victor set (914, $2.63) of a performance by Kindler with the National Symphony. As against the older recorded performance by Fritz Busch with the London Philharmonic, this one has the advantage of richer and more spacious recorded sound. But the power which the Busch performance achieves through its restraint, its directness and structural compactness, the Kindler performance loses through its expansiveness, its rhythmic unsteadiness and structural slackness, its details of overemphasis and fussiness in sonority and pace. The Busch performance, I might add, is recorded with adequate fidelity, clarity, and volume.

On a single disc (11-8239, $1.05) Kindler and his orchestra give us the Polka from Shostakovitch's "Age of Gold"—a piece of Shostakovitch humor-with-a-sledgehammer. On the reverse side is an orchestral arrangement of the Marina-Dmitri duet from Mussorgsky's "Boris Godunov," which is hardly one of the great moments of the work and is not ennobled in this performance. The conclusion, as recorded, is heard with terrific surface-chatter.

The English composer Vaughan Williams is one of the people with the mere facility in sounds that is not enough to produce valuable music. In Williams the facility has given us the enjoyable Fantasia on a theme of Tallis, and on the other hand the more pretentious large-scale use of pictorial and atmospheric material and street-songs in the "London Symphony," with results that are mostly inconsequential and uninteresting. A good performance of the symphony by Goossens with the Cincinnati Symphony is well recorded (Set 916, $5.78).

Bost Records issues Volume 1 (1620-1830) of "The Songs of Early America" (Set ES 1: three 12-inch records in album; $4.75), compiled by Elie Siegmeister and sung by a vocal quartet under his direction. I haven't the passion for folk songs that others have; and so I will comment only on the performances. The voices are good; but I find the enunciation and singing too cultivated, in some instances too arch, and in one instance mistakenly derisive where the song should convey its humor from within.

Better done are the songs of Argentina, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, and Cuba assembled by Irma Labastille in Volume 1 of "Latin-American Typical and Folk Songs" (Set ES 3: four 12-inch records; $6.25).

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Canada Ready for Offensive

Dear Sirs: In the article The Facts About a Second Front, in your issue of September 5, Donald W. Mitchell says in part:

> Of the greatest importance, then, is the army now stationed in the British Isles—probably two million Britishers, plus Free French, Polish, Canadian, and American contingents. . . . Its quality is not easy to gauge. The courage of the men and their eagerness to fight can be taken for granted. But their training—until recent months that of protecting against invasion—their military experience, and their leadership are also vital factors. . . . The American army has increased enormously in both size and striking power in the past year, and it is the only one belonging to the United Nations which has been formed mainly for offensive action.

Canada just now is licking her wounds of Dieppe, essentially a Canadian show. Of one battalion only three officers survived, other ranks in proportion.

Was it just a tryout, seed sown in blood-soaked ground to bloom in the distant flower of victory? Or was it the entering wedge, not there and then to be driven home, of a general offensive, a second front?

Success or failure? History alone can make answer. But no one can deny the élan of the leadership, the gallantry of the troops, representative of Canada from coast to coast, who engaged in that assault. They proved worthy of their blood brothers, the men of Bataan.

From the day in 1939 that the First Canadian Division landed in Britain the troops were trained to the offensive. It grew from a division to a corps, from a corps to an army, the most completely armored force in the world today. Its commander, General MacNaughton, who has been mentioned for the supreme command of a second front, is on record as saying the Canadian army is equipped, trained, and designed to be the spearhead of such an enterprise.

The offensive is the historical role of Canadian soldiers. In the dark hours of Ludendorff's drive of March and April, 1918, when every rifle was needed, the Canadian corps was withdrawn by Foch to G. H. Q. Reserve, only a token force being left in the line before Arras. "I do not despair as long as I have my Canadians," he is reported to have said. There, for the next four months, in safe billets far behind the lines, under the leadership of Sir Arthur Currie, its training was entirely devoted to the spirit and tactics of the offensive. Fruition came on August 8, 1918, termed by Ludendorff "the black day of the German army," when in the Battle of Amiens the Canadian corps broke fourteen miles through enemy lines and so entered upon the series of victories that was to end with the capture of Mons on the eve of the Armistice.

These things being so, it is a trifle disconcerting for a Canadian to read Mr. Mitchell's lines quoted above.

J. F. B. LIVESAY

Clarkson, Ont., September 8

Post-War Worriers

Dear Sirs: I hear much about post-war conditions. But I believe with Paul Mallon that we should concentrate on the war, the business at hand, and take care of post-war affairs after the war is won.

These post-war worriers remind me of a mediocre golfer who is always concentrating on the next shot ahead rather than on his immediate shot. He always winds up second best. Now the one who winds up second best in this war is not going to have much to say about post-war conditions; therefore the post-war worriers, if they are seriously listened to, will not only lose the war for us but find they did all their worrying for nothing, since they will not be consulted on how to run the post-war world.

We hear on every side, "What's going to happen to us after the war?" What are we afraid of? We can make happen just about what we want to happen after we win the war. Let's concentrate on winning and not fill people's minds with forebodings.

The possibility of any change in conditions causes nightmares among some people in high places in the industrial and political worlds. Evidently they have not enough confidence in themselves to feel sure of their position in a changing world—many of them will tumble, no doubt. These are the people who are worrying about the post-war period. They are not worrying so much about the war as about what will happen to them individually after the war.

Most of the men who make up the army are from working families which do not enjoy particular benefits from the richest country on earth; they love their country, but they dream of better days. Can that be a worry for some of our present leaders who want to shape the post-war world to their particular liking? The boys from the army and the navy will have a lot to say about that. These boys may wonder how some men can have 1,000-acre estates, an army of servants, and a fleet of automobiles while they spend a lifetime acquiring a 50-foot lot with a 5-room house on it. Perhaps the chief worry of some persons is whether the soldiers will continue to support such a lopsided system. They may even insist on a democracy in fact as well as in name.

Let us dissipate the myth that a depression is bound to follow the war. If we can have prosperity in a period of destruction, we can have prosperity in a period of construction, and destruction must be followed by construction. If we agree that every citizen is important and that his welfare has a bearing on the rest of us, then we as a nation can go forward to a way of life heretofore undreamed of.

FLAHAVHAN MARTIN

Amarillo, Tex., September 9

The Treasury and the Banks

Dear Sirs: Harold Mager's article on continued government borrowing from banks was excellent. How absurd it is to expect Leon Henderson to stop inflation while the Treasury and the Federal Reserve cooperate with the commercial banks in expanding the nation's money supply! The whole procedure is nothing short of fantastic.

In 1929 a money supply—currency and demand deposits—of about $27 billion was sufficient to finance the production of about $82 billion worth of goods and services. On the same basis $40 billion would finance an annual production worth $120 billion. But our present money supply is already about $54 billion, and at the present rate of increase it will exceed $80 billion a year hence.

There is no need whatever for further borrowing from banks. But it is already clear that the Treasury cannot rely on voluntary investment in government bonds. What is required is a tax on available investment funds—with an

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exemption, say, of $5,000. Such a tax, at the rate, say, of ½ per cent per month, would force savings into investment and supply the Treasury with all the funds it needs at a very low rate of interest.

I don't think that such a tax would increase spending appreciably during the war. People don't usually spend savings except as a last resort.

GEORGE R. WALKER

Boston, Mass., September 9

An Indian Answers Russell

Dear Sirs: I take strong exception to much in Bertrand Russell's letter on India in *The Nation* of September 5. The letter needs to be particularly examined because coming from a distinguished thinker and a friend of India it is bound to carry much weight.

Mr. Russell complains that the American liberals do not know that "one of the points on which the Cripps mission broke down was the unwillingness of the Hindus to admit that Moslems have the same right of independence from Hindus as the Hindus from Britain." That issue had absolutely nothing to do with Cripps's failure. Cripps failed because Britain refused to curtail the dictatorial powers of the Viceroy, and because it refused to trust Indians with the defense of their land. Cripps admitted in the House of Commons that he never once discussed the minority question with the Congress, though he discussed it with the minorities. Of course Congress objected to Cripps's plan, for it implied Pakistan, and Jinnah rejected it for its failure to guarantee Pakistan, but the negotiations finally broke down over the nature of the interim government, not over what was to come at the end of the war.

There is nothing in common between the desire of a fraction of Moslems for independence from the Hindus and the desire of the overwhelming mass of the Indians to end an alien rule. Hindus and Moslems have religious differences that have recently been accentuated by Jinnah's intransigent attitude. Moslems, prior to the British, lived in India for centuries as rulers of the Hindus and since the British have lived as equals. They belong to the same racial stock and speak the same language as the Hindus. This Moslem talk of independence from the Hindus started only in 1939; since Cripps, it has been made the pre-condition of any negotiations between the two groups.

Mr. Russell further complains that American liberals "do not face the difficulty of a complete change of government when a Japanese invasion is imminent." Indians never asked for a drastic change that would involve either an election in India or passage of a bill in Parliament. They did ask for a coalition Indian government with real powers given it by convention or gentlemen's agreement. Russell cites Ireland's case to warn that even the grant of freedom may not fully arouse India for the war. He may be right. But without the grant of this freedom the apathy and bitterness in India will certainly play into the enemy's hands. That is the issue.

Russell takes Louis Fischer to task for suggesting that the disparity between the death rate in Bombay and London burns deep resentment and hatred into the soul of India, and for implying that the death rate is entirely the result of British rule. Fischer merely stated a fact in reporting the existence of this feeling among the Indians, without seeking to justify fully those feelings. The grinding poverty in India is largely responsible for the high death rate, and certainly there is connection between poverty and the government of the day in India. It is quite possible, as Russell suggests, that the death rate in Bombay, with a hot climate, will always be higher than in London, but it need not remain so appallingly high.

Again, Russell may be right in saying that there is no reason to suppose that fewer children would die in Bombay under a government headed by a man like Gandhi, who said that earthquake shocks in India were punishment for sin. Yet this attitude of Gandhi's has never prevented him from actively striving to improve the lot of the Indian masses. Gandhi looks upon British rule, too, as punishment for Indian sins, but he doesn't sit idly by. He also believes that India is paying for its sins against the Untouchables, but he does not leave the matter there; he is exhorting the upper classes to abolish this iniquitous system. In fact, in his opposition to British rule Gandhi is moved largely by the conviction that India's social and economic regeneration is no longer possible under the British.

Finally, I take exception to the composition of the commission Russell proposes for the settlement of the Indian question. He suggests an American, British, Chinese, and Russian member. If a British, why not an Indian? Why should one party in the dispute and not the other be allowed to sit in judgment on its own deeds? Let both parties, Britain and India, give a prior commitment to abide by the decision of an international tribune. Indian nationalism is neither jingoistic nor exclusive; it is international in its outlook. When Indians talk of independence, they mean the absolute end of British domination, and not freedom from legitimate international obligations and responsibilities as Russell seems to imply.

While Russell is perturbed over the lack of clear thinking about India among American liberals, I am perturbed over the present attitude of the English liberals toward India. I wonder if Russell, too, is going the way of Cripps, Norman Angell, and others!

ANUP SINGH

New York, September 10

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